RECORDS AND REFLECTIONS

LADY SIMON

Rev A. Löry L. L. D.
With affectionate regards
from Arnold Thomson
May 1894

RECORDS AND REFLECTIONS.

Yours Sincerely
Rachel Simon

RECORDS AND REFLECTIONS

[illegible]

Writings during Half a Century

(APR[illegible] 1844 [illegible])

[illegible]

LONDON
[illegible] PETHERICK, [illegible]
[illegible] PLACE, LONDON WALL.

1867

RECORDS AND REFLECTIONS

SELECTED FROM HER

Writings during Half a Century,

(APRIL 3RD, 1840, TO APRIL 3RD, 1890).

BY

LADY SIMON.

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TO MY CHILDREN,

MY GRAND-CHILDREN,

AND

MY GREAT-GRAND-CHILDREN,

I DEDICATE THIS VOLUME.

RACHEL SIMON.

April, 1894.

PREFACE.

IN publishing a volume of my reflections, I deem it necessary to say a word of explanation.

Fifty-four years ago I commenced to write down, from time to time, my views and impressions, chiefly the outcome of passing incidents, and I have continued the practice ever since. These writings fill several MS. volumes.

It has occurred to me that some of my reflections, verified, as they have been by time and experience, might not be altogether without interest and profit to others. But my chief motive is to remove some of the prevailing misconceptions in regard to my ancestral religion.

It will be observed that many of the entries, though printed consecutively, are widely separated in point of time. This is due to my wish to select, with few exceptions, only those passages from my writings which refer to public events and personages.

RACHEL SIMON.

1894.

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RECORDS AND REFLECTIONS.

EXTRACT FROM MY FIRST ENTRY.

Aspiration.

APRIL 3RD, 1840. AGED 16.

MY most earnest desire is to fulfil the will of God in all things. My greatest wish is to become perfectly religious; by this I do not refer to matters of form and ceremony, although the outward garb of religion must not be neglected.

When I speak of religion I mean a constant inward sense of communion with God, and such reliance upon Him at all times that I may be proof against flattery and the vanities of the world.

My object in committing my ideas and feelings to writing is, that in time to come, should I be less earnest in my religious views, I may have recourse to my notes, and gain from them renewed spiritual strength.

In our days of prosperity it is more difficult to sustain a religious spirit than in times of adversity, because we are apt to forget that God who has bountifully given may also take away.

A Reflection.

DECEMBER 8TH, 1854.

LIFE on earth is short and uncertain. We pass away "like a shadow," and are forgotten, whilst our spiritual life is eternal.

God is the "father of the spirits of all flesh." In His "Image" we are "created." He is infinite in love and goodness. I believe that it is possible for all of us to attain a far greater expansion of soul than we imagine, but we do not give ourselves the time necessary for the cultivation of this higher growth.

In the achievements of science and art we see wonderful results from intellectual development. Why may we not make spiritual progress in like proportion?

History affords many an example of men and women of intellectual distinction who have yet sought companionship among the unworthy, but those whose spiritual development has kept pace with their intellectual culture wield an influence

for good that cannot be measured. If we drink from the "Fountain of living waters" we shall be true to God and ourselves, and faithful to our fellow-man.

Small Trials.

(A few words of Comfort.)

1859.

TRIALS of every description are intended for man's good. This is a doctrine generally accepted, and it is preached in every pulpit; but it requires no uncommon experience to prove how rarely the attempt is made to give effect to it in practical life.

We cannot enumerate the sources of those smaller trials allotted to man.

Trials do not necessarily imply a condition of overwhelming sorrow and anguish,—the tearing you asunder from those most dear to you—destitution, privation, or sickness:—none of these may fall to your lot; yet trials will assail you in some form or other. You may suffer from a variety of adverse circumstances. Perhaps you may be so placed in life as to be living in a state of discord with those around you; you may be bound to one who can never properly understand your disposition; your best intentions may be

frustrated; or you may receive ingratitude from those whom you have served. In the position of parent, guardian, and teacher, the trials cannot be told—even youth is not exempt. Whether in the schoolroom, or at home, how many disappointments, how various the little troubles, to be endured!

To young and old, then, the same advice must be given:—Turn every trial to account; however trifling in its character, make use of it as the polishing instrument that will change the roughest stone into the jeweller's prize.

It is not an easy work; but it must be the effort of our life if we do really believe that trials are intended for our good.

"Despise not the chastening of the Lord; neither be weary of His correction: for whom the Lord loveth He correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth" (Prov. iii. 11, 12). "For He doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men" (Lam. iii. 33). Then turn your vexed and troubled spirit Heavenward,—even in the trifling details of daily life. You will be surprised to find how much the purification of your inner life will be advanced. Fail to do this, and you will find at best only excuses for ill-humour and impatience.

If a dangerous illness attack your household, or death deprive you of some beloved one, or should some unforeseen accident occur, you will

receive such visitations with a calm and becoming resignation. The reason of this is, because you call into practical life right and true principles. You have seen and felt the hand of God. You have been led to the consciousness of a Father's love in your heavy trouble; and why not trace the same acting principle in your lesser trials? Depend upon it, the same remedy holds good in both cases.

Sometimes our spirit is clouded by a depression for which we cannot wholly account. Could we, on such occasions, take a microscopic view of our inner self, we might trace back the hidden cause to some of those small trials, for which we must apply no less a remedy. It is only by this consciousness of a Divine Father's love that we can strengthen ourselves against the evil results of little troubles upon our temper and our character. To this end prayer is the efficient aid. Upon every occasion of annoyance call to your help a few simple words, such as the following: "O God! let not little things vex me and disturb my spirit, nor let me be disheartened by my own shortcomings; but help me to overcome my deficiencies. Strengthen me with a fervent faith in Thee, so that I may know and feel the good that is in all Thy dispensations."

Let us then, henceforth, regard the small trials of daily life as a means, under God's good

providence, of attaining a more exalted state; and, with this view of our small vexations, we shall daily grow in likeness unto Him in whose image we are created, and on whose divine favour our peace of mind depends.

However dark and difficult our path in life, we cannot be wholly cast down if our spirit be steadfast with God. Let us but fix a steady gaze upon His infinite perfection, let our hearts be true to Him, trust in His parental love, and a holy calm will take the place of a disturbed mind,—a cheerful hope will light up our depressed spirits. This is the strength that God will give us—a strength ever growing, ever enlarging, the nearer we approach the All-powerful and Perfect One: for to trust in God is at once to receive His blessing.

Liberal Sentiments in Matters of Religion.

DECEMBER, 1859.

HAVING had considerable intercourse with persons of various religious denominations, having also studied religious works, advocating diverse doctrinal views, I am quite sure that true religion is not confined to any particular sect. Religion is to be found in the individual according to the

degree in which his moral and spiritual faculties have been brought into active exercise. It is true that "mental errors are apt to mar the soul's best instincts." *

There are religious systems less favourable than others to the development of the higher life, and often more harm than good is wrought to the cause of religion by the exercise of ill-directed zeal. Yet, inasmuch as God is the only source of light, love, and holiness, it is not for us to deny to any religious denomination the possibility of the highest spiritual growth.

The form of religion is often the result of surrounding circumstances, whilst not infrequently we find members of the same family, of equal earnestness, differing widely in their views. Hence it is that I entertain liberal sentiments in matters of religious faith.

"*Trust in the Lord and do good.*"

1859.

NOTWITHSTANDING the many volumes that have been written, and the numberless sermons

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* Professor Newman's Essay on the Soul.

preached upon these words, how rarely do we find them practically illustrated in the life of man.

When we attempt to set forth the holy injunction to trust in God, in the language of Scripture, we know not where to stop, so numerous are the texts which immediately suggest themselves to our minds. The Holy Scriptures teem with them from the very opening to the closing page of the sacred volume.

Wherever the Bible is made the study of a life, argument is superfluous, for it could not add a feather's weight to the solemn language in which this precept is clothed.

"Blessed is the man that trusteth in Him" (Psalm xxxiv. 8). But we are apt to deceive ourselves with the idea that, because this is such a busy world, and we are such active denizens of it, the study of sacred things is only for the minister of religion, or those engaged in studious or contemplative pursuits. Until, however, we discover some other remedy for the troubles and the petty worries of our every day life, we must seek refuge in the Word of God; and, there is no human being so poor, or so sorrowful, but who, by doing so, must rise superior to the difficulties of his situation. "The Eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms" (Deut. xxxiii. 27). This is an assurance at once elevating, and

encouraging alike to old and young, to the learned and the unlearned.

Oh, child of earth! seek God at all times; seek Him in youth, in health, in strength, and in prosperity; wait not until thine evil days come, for come they must, sooner or later. Although God has said of the distressed man, "When he crieth unto me, I will hear, for I am gracious" (Ex. xxii. 27), and when Samuel cried unto the Lord for Israel, "The Lord heard him" (1 Sam. viii. 8) —yet, why shall we wait for the day of our trouble?

It is the greatest possible mistake to suppose that the person whose habit of mind is to trust in the arm of flesh, and in human means only, can, in the hour of real sorrow, place his entire trust in the Lord. David says (2 Sam. xxii. 7): "In my distress I called upon the Lord, and cried to my God, and He did hear my voice out of His temple, and my cry did enter into His ears;" but then, David's trust in God had been the mainspring of his life, even from his youth.

Why did God select *him* from among his brethren, although the youngest of Jesse's sons—the "keeper of his father's flocks"—to be His "anointed," His "chosen one"? The answer is given in these words (1 Sam. xvi. 7), "The Lord seeth not as man seeth, for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the

heart." And we have good reason to suppose that from a very early period of his life, David had known what it was to trust in God: for, when asked by King Saul how he could presume to meet the giant Philistine without either sword, spear, or shield, what was his reply? He humbly related an incident in which, upon one occasion when minding his father's sheep, both a lion and a bear had come out and attacked a little lamb, and he argued in these words (1 Sam. xvii. 37): "The Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, He will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine." Let it be observed that whilst he (David) is the brave actor in the scene, self is lost sight of, in his trust in God.

Out of the multitude of scriptural examples of the paramount importance of cultivating this holy principle, we need but refer to the prophet's severe reproof to Israel: "Woe to them that go down to Egypt for help; and stay on horses, and trust in chariots, because they are many; and in horsemen, because they are strong; but they look not to the Holy One of Israel, neither seek the Lord! * * * Now the Egyptians are men, and not God: and their horses flesh, and not spirit. When the Lord shall stretch out His hand, both he that helpeth shall fall, and he that is holpen shall fall down, and they all shall fail together" (Isa. xxxi. 1-3).

The great work of our lives should be to bring our minds to think more than we do of these things. We must give ourselves time for a little daily contemplation, if we would obtain peace of mind, and strength of heart under all circumstances; and who will deny the fact that these are the blessings most to be desired, and without which life is but a vain dream? To appreciate these blessings, we must cultivate in ourselves and in our children the faculties through which alone we are able to comprehend them.

All who have experienced the blessing of a firm trust in the Almighty, will proclaim with one accord its sustaining power under every adversity or vicissitude of life. There are, unfortunately, many in whom the faculty of religious faith has been suffered to lie dormant, and they are as insensible to the comforting influences of religion, as the blind are to colour.

It is no part of our duty to sit in judgment upon our neighbour; but it is our sacred privilege, as it is our duty, to exercise our moral influence for good over our fellow-men; and, if possible, to lend a helping hand to those whose path in life is thickly strewn with difficulties. When our affairs run smoothly with us, when all our purposes are fulfilled, the wishes of our hearts gratified, and our spirits elated by our success, we are apt to flatter ourselves that we can readily obey the

injunction to trust in God; but in this happy state of self-assurance possibly we may be deceiving ourselves, for certainly we can never deceive Him who sees the most hidden secrets of the heart. We may enjoy many a sunshiny chapter in our lives, but it is not in these seasons that our trust in God is brought into active exercise. It is when assailed by the endless sources of trial, vexation, and disappointment, from which no one wholly escapes, that we are brought to understand the blessing of a firm trust in a Higher Power than our own. The doctrine that "Man is born to trouble, as the sparks fly upwards," is a truth which is echoed by every human heart.

There is not a more common, and certainly no more fatal, error than for one person to point to another, whose position in life appears to be more prosperous than his own, and to proclaim him as an example of God's favour, and of the blessedness of this life. By this ill-judged comparison we enhance the very trials that are already too heavy for us; whereas, it should ever be remembered that before we can venture to form a just estimate of another's happiness, we must see the entire account as only the Infinite Eye can see it, and not select an isolated chapter separated from its context. So long as we do this, we shall for ever be drawing wrong conclusions, and gain nothing in wisdom. Much as we have to suffer,

hard though our struggle be, uncertain as our lives are, yet there can be no doubt that the condition of things, as we find them, is precisely that most favourable to a growing trust in the Almighty.

There is no calling in life—whether in business, in the arts, the sciences, or a learned profession, in which a man can attain success, without much industry, and wading through many difficulties; and it is only by overcoming these difficulties step by step that we can accomplish the object of our wishes or our ambition. So it is precisely with our spiritual life: we must cultivate our souls, educate our spirits by constant watchful exercise in sacred thoughts, and by holy practice, before we can attain to that pure frame of mind which it should be our object, as it is our highest happiness to acquire. The present is our only sure chance for this holy work, for how can we venture to rest upon a future which never may be ours? Let us, then, use aright the time now present, and develop the image of our Maker which He has impressed upon us.

It will require a great effort—much self-denial, and an unceasing watchfulness over ourselves. We shall have to awaken energies within us of whose existence we have perhaps never been conscious; but this very discipline is God's blessing. Where would the exercise of patience be if patience were not needed? Where the exercise of

gentleness, when the temper is never ruffled? Where the exercise of trust in God, if all things were secured to us? With this view of the high and exalting objects to be obtained out of the mixture of good and evil, we shall cease to murmur at much which otherwise would be only unqualified misery.

For the attainment of that state of mind which enables us to exclaim with the Psalmist (xviii. 2), "The Lord is my rock, my fortress, deliverer, my God, my strength, in whom I will trust," prayer affords the surest aid. By this we imply the frequent uplifting of the soul to God; a habit of mind natural to the spirit of man, but at the same time a habit which grows stronger by exercise.

Let him who has hitherto had no other idea of prayer than that of joining at set times in a written formula of public or private worship, let him, in the simple language of his heart, utter himself to his God, or give expression to the first sigh of his heart. The little child can be made to understand this. There is nothing so simple, yet nothing so important, for our progress in that path which "is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto perfect day." See what comfort it is to unburden our minds to a sympathising friend; the more kindly he listens to us the greater our relief. Many have felt actually light-hearted after such communion; and

yet, nothing but that communion has taken place: the state of things has not changed with them. In what, then, has consisted the comfort? Certainly in the influence of sympathy. If this be a fact in the case of human sympathy, let the troubled soul utter itself before its Heavenly Friend who is ever near, and infinite in mercy and love. Let no one plead the excuse, "I am not eloquent," but "slow of speech;" for the reply is immediately at hand (Ex. iv. 10), "Who made man's mouth? who maketh the dumb to speak, and the deaf to hear? Have not I, the Lord?" And why shall He not be with us, as He was with Moses? When the people murmured against him for want of drink (Ex. xv. 23, 24), Moses was helpless in himself, but, "He cried unto the Lord." This he did upon every occasion of anxiety and trouble. When Hannah "was in bitterness of soul," she offered up a prayer so silent, that only "her lips moved, but her voice was not heard" (1 Sam. i. 10), and yet the time came, when she said of Samuel (ver. 27), "For this child I prayed, and the Lord hath given me my petition."

In process of time, "The children of Israel said to Samuel, Cease not to cry unto the Lord our God for us; and Samuel cried unto the Lord for Israel, and the Lord heard him" (1 Sam. vii. 8, 9).

In the 142nd Psalm we find a description of what

may be regarded as the very *quintessence* of prayer. At a time when David was "brought very low" by means of his persecutors, who "had become stronger than he," when all earthly refuge failed him, and "no man cared for his soul," he said, "I poured out my complaint before Him; I showed before Him all my trouble." This is precisely the relief we need, when, as Solomon said at the dedication of the Temple, "every one shall know his own sore and his own grief," and shall offer his "own prayer and supplication;" "then hear Thou from Heaven Thy dwelling place, and forgive, and render unto every man according unto all his ways, whose heart Thou knowest, for Thou only knowest the hearts of the children of men."

With these few scriptural references in support of our views, we will conclude in the words of the Psalmist—

"Trust in Him at all times, ye people, and pour out your heart before Him."

Psalm lxii. 8.

Idol Worship.

"Shall a man make gods unto himself, and they are no gods?" (Jer. xvi. 20).

1862.

WE protest against the sin of our forefathers in worshipping the "golden calf," and making gods for themselves that are not gods; but in modern times we fail to see the error of making the vanities of life the supreme objects of our being.

It is not because we cannot live without material things, that the attainment of riches should be regarded as the true purpose of life. "Man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live" (Deut. viii. 3).

Let the loving parent consider these things, that he may bequeath to his children something better than silver and gold. The tendency of the age is to provide for the indulgence of pride and vanity. No false god was ever more false. Generation succeeds generation, while the error finds its consequence in disappointment and misery.

Material wealth without the gifts of heart, soul, and mind, will not purchase either peace or happiness.

Behold the records of strife and unhappiness in

families where the parents believed in no other god than that made by their own hands, whilst ignoring the love of God.

Let us learn from the pages of the past how to educate our children in the knowledge of a higher life.

Our greatest dignity has its mainspring in the soul—not in the abundance of material possessions.

"Trust in the Lord and do good."

"If we seek Him, we shall surely find Him."

Judaism in its Practical Aspect.

(Addressed to my Children.)

JULY, 1862.

JUDAISM provides for the perfect development of that which is divine in us. "God created man in His own image" (Gen. i. 27). We must bring into active exercise the Godlike elements of our nature. This is the keynote of the Jewish religion, as we learn it from Moses and the prophets.

The law "is not hidden" from us, "neither is it far off; . . . . the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it" (Deut. xxx. 10-14).

When we obey the will of God, we rise above the influences of our lower passions. We are taught our duty towards the "widow," the "fatherless," the poor and "needy," the "aged," the "stranger," and our "enemies." Consideration for the feelings of others is the basis of this teaching.

"Thou shalt not oppress an hired servant that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy brethren, or of thy strangers that are in thy land within thy gates" (Deut. xxiv. 14-22). "At his day thou shalt give him his hire, neither shall the sun go down upon it, for he is poor, and setteth his heart upon it."

When we help our "poor brother" we must do it with a willing heart. "Thou shalt surely give him, and thine heart shalt not be grieved when thou givest unto him" (Deut. xv. 7-11).

We live, as it were, a double life—that which the world sees, and that which only God sees, and will pass judgment upon. We may deceive our fellow-man, but never can we hide from God the motives of our actions.

The Jewish religion blends the inner and the outer life, and each imparts something needful to the other. The true Israelite extends his charity to all, and entertains no ill-will towards those who differ from him in religion.

The laws of kindness and consideration are binding upon the Israelite; they govern his actions.

The "stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself." "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself; I am the Lord" (Leviticus xix. 18, 34).

The agriculturist was forbidden to gather the "gleanings of the harvest"—or of his "vineyard." They were to be left for the "poor" and the needy. By the law of Moses it was their right to gather them.

In all matters of justice and judgment we are bound to judge our neighbours in righteousness. All who do unrighteousness are an abomination to the Lord thy God (Deut. xxv. 16). "Thou shalt be perfect with the Lord thy God" (Deut. xviii. 13). Judaism demands of us purity of heart, and purity of life.

Is there a more common practice than that of taking up a "reproach" against a neighbour and "tale-bearing"? These are among the sins forbidden by our religion.

The prophet Zechariah said, "Let none of you imagine evil against his brother in your heart, nor against his neighbour."

Judaism bears specially upon our every day life in relation to God, and our surroundings.

The prophet Micah said: "God has shewed thee, O man, what is good for thee, and what doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly, to

love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God" (Mic. vi. 8). By the careful study and practice of the spirit of Judaism on our part, the nations shall say of us, "Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people" (Deut. iv. 6). "Only take heed to thyself and keep thy soul diligently" (ver. 9).

The Truth, the Bible and Religion.

1863.

TRUTH is as precious to me as life itself. Judaism is precious to me because I find in it religious truth.

The Bible declares to me great principles in relation to Israel's mission, and our hope in a happy future for all the nations of the earth.

The same God reigns now in human affairs as in those recorded more than three thousand years ago—from Genesis to Malachi. Let us then cherish the Bible, from which we learn wisdom and true religion and all that God requires of us in our daily life.

The Discipline of Life.

1867.

WE live in a disciplinary state. Those who observe life from the higher standpoint cannot fail to come to this conclusion. I am anxious to imbue my children with this conception of life.

Those who make the Bible their guiding light by which to illumine the events of their personal experience, will perceive that every dispensation is a means of discipline.

As a loving father corrects his children, so does God correct man. We live too far from God in thought and feeling; we do not sufficiently commune with Him in our daily life; therefore we do not realise His nearness to us at all times. "He is near to all who call upon Him in truth."

When we are in possession of all that the world can give us, we seem to need no more, but when we are in danger or when troubles overtake us, then it is that we learn the necessity of religion.

Job had evidently attained to this conception of life, as a means of discipline, when he exclaimed at the close of his long argument, "I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth Thee" (Job xlii. 5). Our earthly existence is to many a severe school, but we are born to encounter difficulties, by them we are

purified, God draws us to Himself, and we seek Him lovingly. Our daily life is transformed under the influence of God's love, and we perform great deeds of benevolence, and acts of loving-kindness to one another, because the "Image of God" becomes reflected upon our souls by communion with Him, and the beauty of holiness is seen in our daily life, when we "walk humbly with God."

A General Thanksgiving.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 27TH, 1872.

ON this memorable day, the rich and the poor meet together to give thanks for the recovery of the Prince of Wales. It will be a day of joy and praise indeed.

"Blessed art thou, O Lord, who healeth the sick." "I will pay thee my vows which my lips have uttered when I was in distress."

On the 11th December, 1871, I made note of the general grief that prevailed in loving sympathy with the mother, wife, and devoted family of the Prince of Wales. Earnestly I prayed for his life and restoration to health.

This day I and my husband in St. Paul's

Cathedral will echo the words of the Psalmist. "Let the people praise Thee, O God; let all the people praise Thee; let the nations be glad and sing for joy; for Thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon the earth."

Purim, and the Jews of Roumania and Servia.

MARCH, 1872.

TO-DAY is the Feast of Purim. It is annually observed in memory of a great event in Israel's history.

Ahasuerus, one of the kings of the Medes and Persians, who "reigned over a hundred and twenty-seven provinces from India to Ethiopia," had sanctioned the destruction of a remnant of Israelites, settled in Shushan, through the malice of Haman, the enemy of the Jews. "The King took his ring from his hand and gave it unto Haman," and letters were sent by posts unto all the King's provinces, "to destroy, to kill, and to cause to perish all Jews both young and old, little children and women, in one day, even upon the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is

the month Adar, and to take the spoil of them for a prey" (Esther iii. 10, 15).

This wicked design was frustrated by the influence of Queen Esther.

After three days of prayer and fasting, she strengthened her faith trusting in God. She appealed to the King, "not according to the law," saying, "If I perish, I perish" (Est. iv. 15, 16). The result was, that her good influence prevailed, and the Jews had "light, gladness, joy, and honour." The memory of those days has been preserved ever since. It is a day of joy, a feast is provided for the poor!

The event of Purim happened about 510 years before the common era.

We are to-day reading of the persecution of a remnant of Israelites in Roumania and Servia, by the same evil spirit that moved Haman of old. I now pray God, as Esther did, to frustrate their evil designs, by means of the powerful influence of this country.

In volume 239 of Hansard's Parliamentary Debates, we read that upon the motion of Sir Francis Goldsmid, this question was discussed on the 19th April, 1872. My husband took part in the debate, and was instrumental in getting many Christian members of the House of Commons to speak.

It is sad indeed to contemplate that in the

nineteenth century there should exist the need of such appeals on behalf of the people of Israel,—that they should be suffering still under the cruel persecution of some foreign countries.

God takes cognizance of both the good and evil workings of the human heart. It is often by very simple means that great ends are brought about.

God grant that this may be so, at the present time, concerning the Jews of Roumania and Servia and elsewhere!

Mrs. Elizabeth Fry.

NOVEMBER, 1872.

I HAVE read with great pleasure a memoir and journal of Mrs. Elizabeth Fry—published by her two daughters.

Born on the 21st May, 1780, Mrs. Fry belonged to the Society of "Friends" or Quakers.

Their habit of mind is essentially reflective.

Mrs. Fry was one of the finest types of Quaker character. As soon as the duties of her active domestic life, (as mother of eleven children) permitted, her benevolence and loving nature found vent in matters of deepest interest to humanity—the management of prisons and their inmates.

Her frequent meetings of "Friends" for the purpose of communion with God afforded her that spiritual strength without which she could not have exerted the influence that gave success to her life's work.

She seemed to walk with God.

From her journal of June, 1812, I copy these words: "Through all my tried states I have an unspeakable blessing to acknowledge, and that is an increase of faith."

Her faith in God was the motive force of her life. Hence it was that her moral influence was as remarkable in palaces as in prisons. The source of her power did not consist in great intellectual attainments, but in her loving, gentle nature; her life had been essentially domestic.

The interest of her journal consists in the revelation of her inner life and in the vigour of her perfect faith in God.

Fox, the founder of the "Society of Friends," said the "light of life was within ourselves, to be sought for by each individual in the recesses of his own bosom in silence." Thus it is that the "Image of God" in the soul influences our daily life. The beautiful character and life of Mrs. Elizabeth Fry are of special interest to me.

In Memoriam.

Extract from the close of my fourth MS. volume, from May 29th to June 29th, 1873.

THOU hast called my beloved son James from out of this world into life eternal in his young manhood, in the midst of health and strength.

God has taken him in the fulness of infinite love; "he shall not return to me, but I shall go to him." I loved him so deeply, I knew his noble, gifted nature. He was twenty-five years and nine months old when God took him, after four days' warning. May this terrible blow bring me nearer to God. May this great sorrow make me wiser, and enable me to sustain others.

June 3rd. One week gone since the first link in the family circle was broken. My tenderly beloved child, whose soul was a portion of my own! Let me not mourn as if I had no faith in God. The eye of faith can see a future of love and blessedness. "Remember how short my time is; so teach me to number my days, and apply my heart to wisdom."

Time will heal the wounds in my heart, but never—never shall I cease to live with him in loving sympathy in his new sphere of perfect love in Heaven. Love is the source of our bitter grief, so it is the only source of our peace and joy. I

shall never again hear that sweet voice. Life is God's to give, and His to take away.

"Since the beginning of days men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither has the eye seen, O God, beside Thee, what He hath prepared for him that waiteth for Him."

June 22nd. Four weeks to-day since my angel son, James, was taken from us. The grand faith of Israel in the Immortality of the Soul alone sustains me. "The Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory" (Isaiah lx. 19).

I cannot close this record of our great sorrow without expressing my deep sympathy with the young mother Princess Alice and her mother the Queen, who are mourning the sad death of the little Prince William of Hesse, who has just died at Darmstadt, on the 1st of June, from a terrible accident.

Levitical Dietary Laws.

APRIL, 1874.

IN the course of my study of the Pentateuch, my attention has been directed to those portions of the law relating to "Sacrifices." In the Book of

Leviticus much care has been bestowed upon details concerning the slaying of animals for food. In an age and in countries where the most horrible practices prevailed, the laws concerning the food to be eaten by the Israelites needed religious supervision. There was no hidden meaning in these laws. What was holy food on the "first" day was forbidden to be eaten on the "third" day (Lev. vii. 31). Who does not know that generations are afflicted both physically and morally by the impurities arising from ignorance or neglect of the laws of God.

The Israelites were surrounded by people whose habits were barbarous; hence the necessity for very strict laws in relation to their food, and various other matters pertaining to their daily life.

In the slaying of animals religious ceremonies were observed, in order to keep the Israelites pure and capable of appreciating the higher teachings of love and holiness (Lev. xvii. 3).

These laws, therefore, were the means to great ends.

The Israelites were the appointed teachers for all time to come—that the world might learn that "the Lord, He is God, the Lord God is one."

"And now Israel! What doth the Lord require of thee but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all His ways, and to love Him, and to serve the

Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul" (Deut. x. 12).

At Ramsgate.

(Sir Moses Montefiore.)

MAY, 1877.

ONCE again my dear husband and I have had the pleasure of dining with our revered friend Sir Moses Montefiore at East Cliff, Ramsgate. Upon the last occasion it was on our thirtieth wedding day (July 12th, 1873). Sir Moses is now over 93.

I have been particularly impressed by his youthful spirits, and the cordiality with which he received us. He called it a "holiday" for him. He told me with what interest he had watched my husband's career, and how keenly he had appreciated the zeal with which he had worked in defence of his people, both in and out of parliament. He referred especially to the great National Conference on the Eastern Question, at St. James' Hall on the 8th of December, 1876, at which my husband spoke. He also referred to many other great occasions of national interest in which my husband had taken part. He remarked that "these thoughts made him feel young

again." He said to me, "Your husband is the champion of our people," — adding these words, "God bless him! God has blessed *me* in your husband." Sir Moses spoke with much enthusiasm of the religion which had influenced his whole life. He also spoke of his ever lamented and beloved wife, who had for so many years entered into his work. He said that although she was over seventy when she died, she never seemed to him more than thirty-five.

Sir Moses seemed to me to embody the theory of the immortality of the soul more than any one I had ever met. So old physically yet so young in spirit. His soul full of loving sympathy, peace and gratitude to God.

"Think and Thank" was his motto.

Hours of Thought.

(The Rev. Dr. Martineau.)

1879.

IT is the vocation of the bee to gather honey from sweetly scented flowers. "Wisdom is sweeter than honey, and the honeycomb."

Dr. Martineau says (page 46): "Men discuss with the lips each others' creeds, instead of going into silence with their own God."

The author writes on the subject of Justice (page 341): "Where there is no quieting perception of a Divine presence in the world, the sense of justice, the indignation of wrong, sinks into a revolutionary passion, fantastic in its speech, and reckless in its way, instead of a grave and considerate obedience to the eternal law of God."

In this eloquent language my own views are embodied. Our moral and spiritual sensibilities become keener by contact with the "Father of the spirits of all flesh."

If we lived day by day closer with God, we should find a solution of some of the most difficult problems of human experience. Why shall we grope in darkness when light is possible?

The fact that we can commune with God is evidence that neglect to cultivate this power must be fatal to our peace of mind, and to our sense of truth and justice.

There are comparatively few men fit to be leaders of thought; of these Dr. Martineau is one.

In the year 1853 I heard him preach from time to time. He gave utterance to prayers which could not fail to impart to all who heard him elevated thought and spiritual comfort.

The Liberal Party returned to Power.

MARCH, 1880.

THE spring of the present year has opened an exciting chapter in the history of the country. The general election has resulted in bringing back the Liberals to power, after six years of Conservative Government.

I rejoice to record the fact that my dear husband has again been returned for Dewsbury with a complete union of the Liberal party.

Those who make the spirit of the Bible a special study are justified in holding the theory as to the need of a higher guidance in human affairs. There are sources of strength within the reach of all who trust in God. On each occasion of a contested election I have recognised in the old records of the book of Joshua principles at work analogous to those of our own times. Those who see the events of history with mortal vision only, fail to recognise a higher purpose in the incidents of life.

In the severe battles that Joshua had to fight before obtaining the promised land of Canaan, he was strengthened by his inward consciousness that he was doing the will of God; he encouraged the people by his own faith, "And Joshua said, Hereby ye shall know that the living God is among you"

(Josh. iii. 10). "The Lord magnified Joshua in the sight of all Israel" (iv. 14).

The reins of Government are once more held by Mr. Gladstone, to whose great intellectual and moral power and eloquence I attribute this reaction in the Liberal cause.

A Reflection.

JULY 20TH, 1880.

IN life's experiences there are circumstances so trying, so hard to bear, that unless we can find refuge in reflections that lift up our souls and bring us into communion with our Heavenly Father, we should lose heart. It is in times of vexation, in times of sorrow, that we are put to the test. We have to discover for ourselves in what consists that help which constitutes the true efficacy of prayer.

The world is full of pride and vanity. If by communion with God we can rise above the troubles and vexations that beset us, then shall we know that we have not sought Him in vain. An hour in Thy presence is worth a thousand elsewhere, "for the Lord will give grace and

glory"—"no good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly" (Ps. lxxxiv.). Not for all that the world could offer me would I give up those sacred moments of my life! "Man that is in honour and understandeth not is like the beasts that perish" (Ps. xlix.). If we want evidence that human trials are for a wise and divine purpose, we have only to remember those who have lived, and those who still live, whose characters stand out as examples of all that is good and noble, loving and lovable, whose influence can never die; whilst there are others who are only next to the "brute" in nature, whose "portion" is in this life. They are "not in trouble as other men," they have "more than heart could wish." A Psalmist said: "A brutish man knoweth not, neither doth a fool understand this" (Ps. xcii. 6).

I desire to possess a direct influence upon others "through the beauty of holiness." Our refuge and strength are in meditation, prayer and sacred communion! Our greatest aim in this short life should be to attain the knowledge of God, and the government of ourselves.

The "Spirit of God" and the "Peace of God."

NOTE.—For Scripture references to this subject, see Appendix.

TO believe in the presence of the Infinite God, and His nearness to us, is the most purifying influence possible to man: the peace of God must follow naturally,—happiness will be the result. The Bible abounds with this teaching. There will yet be a reign of peace on earth, when war shall cease and governments will rule in the spirit of God. The recent movement for the settlement of international differences by arbitration is a cheering indication of the realization of this hope. The family life is a type of the life of mankind; as we pray for the peace of the home, so we may seek the harmony of nations. It has always interested me to observe that above the many points of differences in religion, there is yet an unspeakable bond of union in the aspiration of those of every creed who seek the love of God and the peace of men.

A few Words about the "Knowledge of God."

OCTOBER, 1880.

IF ever an age demanded the outspoken utterances of the heart and mind this is that age. If ever there was a time when an Israelite might fairly claim to say a few words amidst the general freedom and expression of thought,—that time has arrived.

I feel myself justified in putting forth my claim to bear testimony to the importance of living a life of faith, as well as action, because in me has been centred a large experience.

We are living in an age of freedom for all creeds. Every shade of opinion is represented and openly expressed! There is no lack of argument to prove the truth of any and every theory. The result of this liberty of thought openly expressed is, that we find the professing and so-called "Atheist" asserting his claim to be heard in the assembly of the nation. Truth cannot be proved by the voice of authority. Intellectual culture may be necessary to sustain an argument; and the gift of eloquence is needed in order to convey truth to the public mind.

Putting aside, for the time being, both "logical proof" and "authority," there are experiences in every spiritual life which transcend all language!

It is well that these "experiences" have not been confined to any special creed, but have been recorded by those who have represented every form of belief.

As an Israelite, I rejoice when I recognise this fact; and I rejoice in the enlightened views of others, irrespective of the form in which such views are manifested. Gladly I avail myself of the help of stronger intellects than my own, without regard to the particular mould of thought in which the inner life has been encrusted. I know where to look for the rocks in the sea of other faiths than my own; and, therefore, like the experienced pilot, I have no need to fear lest I be wrecked in the rough ocean of creeds! I have always proclaimed myself open to higher influences. I am, therefore, anxious to transmit to my generations what my views are, and not leave them open to others to explain them. In my desire to put forth my own faith, which is the sustaining power of my life, I steer clear of controversy, whilst it is my purpose to show that the faith of Moses, David, and the Prophets is not a system adapted for the "childhood of the human race only" (as so many good people of other creeds suppose), nor is it an old ruin, to be erased, and a new edifice built in its place! The reverse of this is the fact.

In that glorious revelation of Sinai, every succeeding faith finds its brightest hope. Not until

the religion of Moses shall be understood will the nations "agree to differ," and to live in peace and good will!

I take then my standpoint thus—

"The Lord our God is one!"
"His name one!"

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, soul, and mind" (Deut. vi. 5).

If I begin with texts, I may exhaust my subject on every point of my faith, and yet shall not have left my own individual testimony to the truths which I desire to put forward.

From Genesis to Malachi, the Scriptures abound with texts that express, far more eloquently than I can, that "God is the rock of our lives and a refuge for all," and that "those who look up unto Him become enlightened, and their faces are not ashamed."

I believe that the simple heart and mind of the child will become wiser, and more enlightened, by the process of communion with God, than is possible to the "strong minded" man or woman with finely-strung sentiments, with science and philosophy, but who ignores the need of communion with God!

In every phase of human existence difficulties arise, which are met by arguments utterly opposed to one another (yet equally logical), as against the

theory of faith in prayer! We are also asked to explain the inequalities of life.

Why do we see the sufferings of angelic characters, whilst we see an abundance of all things showered down, as it were, upon the most sensual and godless of people? The answer to all this is not to be found in argument. The answer is this—"Learn to know God!" You have the faculty; go and use it! It is not so difficult as you think. The difficulty consists in your own wilful opposition to God's will; in your pride, in your vanity, in your selfishness;—not in God! He is your Father, your loving Father; you are His child. Moses said (Deut. iv. 1): "Ye are the children of the Lord your God."

This is the answer to every difficulty. He has bounded your life by time. If, during the limited period that is yours, you fail to apply your heart to the "knowledge of God," which is your highest "wisdom," you are the loser!

In respect to your position in life, your talents, your education, or your surroundings, these are matters of circumstance, or inheritance, that have a simile in the circumstances that may be said to have caused one tree to bear apples in an orchard, and another to twine up a house with sweet roses!

Human life, organized with affections so deep, with sensibilities so fine, with a nature so sus-

ceptible of happiness or misery, and with powers of reasoning so acute, affords proof enough that we have within ourselves the capability of working out our own happiness,—aided by the guiding light of our immortal teachers.

If it be shown that the "knowledge of God" was manifested in individual souls before the Sinaitic period, so much the better for our sacred cause; as these instances prove our intuitive SPIRITUAL NATURE.

As concerns the outer life of the Israelite—the domestic laws which regulated it, as recorded in Biblical history—they are but outward expressions of fundamental principles, involving the "knowledge of God": such as the keeping sacred in memory and in ceremony, the great events in our history—such as the Passover, and other sacred, days, the Sabbaths of rest, and "Pentecost," commemorating the time of the Sinaitic Revelation; —all else must change, like the scenes of a stage performance.*

The faith of Moses cannot pass away with the changing scenes of life, because it is an undying vital energy in the soul, simply explained by Moses himself, thus:—(Deut. xxx.) "Thou shalt hearken

* Let me not be misunderstood to imply that these "Holy Festivals" and observances are of little worth. I consider them to be of vital importance to the Israelite.—R. S.

to the voice of the Lord thy God, and keep his commandments, which are written in this book of the law."

"Turn unto the Lord thy God, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul." This command is "not hidden from thee, neither is it far off." "The word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart that thou mayest do it." This is the faith to the efficacy of which I desire to bear my humble testimony. It is my "glory," as an Israelite, as it is my "mission" to rejoice in the diffusion of this faith, throughout the nations of the earth.

It is not the structure of the building that gives the light and warmth of the sun's rays; it is its position.

If the windows open towards the east, where the sun rises, the morning sun will gladden the rooms; how much more will the light of God's countenance shine upon the heart and mind of one whose soul turns towards God with all its affections and with all its energies!

I believe that the soul is capable of wonderful development, and that it is attained by the exercise of the reflective faculties, and by direct communion with God.

The command to "love God" cannot be obeyed at pleasure simply—it is a process of spiritual life and culture of our inner and higher nature!

We are commanded to "honour our parents." We are not commanded to love our children, nor to love ourselves: because, as we live again in our children, so we love them as we love ourselves. Yet, we are apt to do them wrong, even in our love, unless that love towards them is influenced by the divine love; and we also wrong ourselves by our selfishness!

In the 85th Psalm David says, "I will hear what God the Lord will speak: for He will speak peace unto His people, and to His saints: mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other. Truth shall spring out of the earth, and righteousness shall look down from Heaven." This sentiment describes the exquisite harmony that should exist between our life on earth and our faith in God.

It is this harmony that dignifies our nature: without it we grow old in our weaknesses, and remain like children; we cling to the toys of life, and often lose ourselves, and we become a prey to our vexations, when those toys are broken or taken from us.

A life with God on earth raises us above all frivolity, whilst the passing pleasures of the world are not the less enjoyed.

The pleasures of social life are enhanced by our spiritual life, because our affections become intensified and diffused by divine influence and love.

What we most need, then, is the "knowledge of God." We need a continual "renewal of the spirit."*

Every age has produced men who receive inspiration from God, and are able to give help to others.

Zechariah says to his brethren (vii. 16), "Speak ye every man the truth to his neighbour; execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates; Let none of you imagine evil in your hearts against his neighbour, these are things that I hate, saith the Lord."

"Love the truth and peace."

Malachi (ii. 10) makes this touching appeal, "Have we not all one father? Hath not one God created us? Why do we deal treacherously every man against his brother?

"Take heed to your spirit, that ye deal not treacherously."

Isaiah says (lvii. 5), "Thus saith the high and lofty one, that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy, I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a humble and contrite spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones."

Who could fail to be moved by such appeals?

The false lights of a vain world may, for a time,

* "Renew within me a right spirit."—Psalm li. 10.

veil our eyes and darken our spiritual vision, but the hour must come, sooner or later, when the brightest things of the world will fade away from our sight, and, alas, for ourselves, if we have failed (in our best days) to cultivate the inner and higher nature, which brings before us God's lovingkindness and His tender mercies in every dispensation.

David said (Psalm cxiv. 4), "Man is like to vanity, his days are as a shadow that passeth away, therefore," (he added) "my soul thirsteth after Thee. I cried unto Thee, O Lord: I said, Thou art my refuge. While I live I will praise the Lord."

This is the teaching that will never cease.

In these days it should be listened to "like the sound of the cherubim's wings which were heard" (as described in Ezekiel's vision) "even in the outer court, as the voice of the Almighty God when He speaketh" (Ezekiel x. 5).

The wise man said (Eccles. xi. 13), "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man."

David and the Psalms.

JULY, 1881.

THE purpose of these "Few Words" is not to narrate the history of David, but to show what his direct influence has been. His words have given life and strength to the heart. The inspiration which his soul received from God has swayed the world ever since. Succeeding generations have gained light and strength and comfort from the inspired poets of Israel. David's position was a remarkable one from his youth, We hear of him first in the 16th chapter of 1 Samuel. When Samuel was sent to the house of Jesse, in order to anoint the future King of Israel, seven of Jesse's sons passed before Samuel, but he said, "The Lord hath not chosen these." Then Samuel said, "Are here all thy sons?" The father replied, "There remaineth yet the youngest, and he keepeth the sheep;" and Samuel said to Jesse, "Send and fetch him, for we will not sit down till he come hither." David is described at this time as being "ruddy" and of a "beautiful countenance." The Lord said to Samuel, "Arise, anoint him," for "this is he." Then Samuel took "the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brethren;" and the Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward

The last we hear of David's life is when he was "old" and stricken in years. The days of David drew nigh that he should die; and he charged his son Solomon, saying, "I go the way of all the earth; be thou strong, therefore, and show thyself a man; and keep the charge of the Lord thy God, to walk in His ways and keep His statutes, and His commandments, and His judgments, and His testimonies, as it is written in the Law of Moses, that thou mayest prosper in all that thou doest, and whithersoever thou turnest thyself, that the Lord may continue His word which He spake concerning me, saying, If thy children take heed to thy way, to walk before Me in truth, with all their heart, and with all their soul, there shall not fail thee (saith He) a man on the throne of Israel" (1 Kings ii. 1-4).

After this appeal to his son Solomon, he died. "So David slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David," after having reigned over Israel forty years, thirty-three years of which he reigned in Jerusalem, and the other seven years in Hebron.

David was by no means a perfect man; he was subject to human passions, and committed acts of glaring sinfulness. This he acknowledges himself.

I believe that the cause of religion suffers from any attempt to slur over those parts of David's

history which tell of his misdeeds; but, by the power of his inner life, he overcame his evil passions, and he has shown to succeeding generations the blessed fruits of the soul's development. Objection is made to the spirit of revenge manifested in many of the Psalms; and to the outbursts of violent temper in which the Psalmist indulges at some of the wrongs inflicted upon him by those who had been his dearest friends in his more prosperous days.

I venture to assert, that every objection that I have heard against David's life, and his Psalms, bears the strongest evidence of their value; because, in the story of his life, we see all those human vicissitudes which are common to every generation. Throughout the hundred and fifty Psalms called incorrectly "The Psalms of David," almost every emotion is described of which the heart is capable. In seasons of prosperity or adversity, in times of joy or sorrow, the Psalter offers us utterances suitable for the occasion. Who has not known what it is to feel "sorely pained" at heart? David said, "My heart is sore pained within me;" but he finds immediate relief in the outpourings of his grief by communion with God.

What must have been the agony of a soul like David's, when he complains of the "reproaches" of those whom he loved! "It was not an 'enemy'

who 'reproached me,' that I could have borne; but it was 'thou,' a man mine equal, my guide and my acquaintance." With these reflections he loses his balance for a moment in anger and indignation; but what follows?

"As for me, I will call upon God, and the Lord shall save me;" "Evening, morning, and noon, will I pray, and cry aloud; and He shall hear my voice."

Although such extreme conditions of distress do not attend every one, yet we are all subject to similar temptations to anger and indignation. We, therefore, stand in need of help in order to subdue our passions! From David we learn the soothing effect of communion with God! No wonder he advises all people to "pour out" their "hearts to God." Thus, the illumined soul of David sheds light upon others; and blessed is every soul that seeks God as David did when he said in his 42nd Psalm, "My soul thirsteth for God," and "It is good for me to draw near to God" (Psalm lxxiii. 28).

This is the great need of every life; by this constant life with God, David obtained a knowledge of God that rendered him a worthy teacher of his fellow man; he said, "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting" (Psalm cxxxix.).

"Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips; incline not my heart to any evil thing." "Mine eyes are unto Thee, O God, the Lord; in Thee is my trust, leave not my soul destitute" (Psalm cxli.). By the influence of these frequent appeals to the Throne of Grace he became as a little child in humility and love. "I will walk within my house with a perfect heart." "Keep back Thy servant from presumptuous sins: let them not have dominion over me" (Psalm xix.). "Surely I have behaved and quieted myself as a child that is weaned of his mother: my soul is even as a weaned child" (Psalm cxxxi.).

David's spiritual life is progressive! This continuous development of his higher nature is a matter of deepest interest; thus it was, that the older he grew, the more qualified by his experiences did he become to shed light and wisdom upon succeeding generations among all the nations of the earth. "Who will show us any good?" he said; "Lord, lift Thou up the light of Thy countenance upon us."

This was the man who went through such sorrow as to have called forth these words: "The Lord has heard the voice of my weeping" (Psalm vi.); "put Thou my tears into Thy bottle; are they not in Thy book?" "In God I have put my trust, I will not be afraid what man can do unto me."

From the depths of these sorrows he rises to positive joy! "I will go unto the altar of God, unto God, my exceeding joy." The result is peace of mind (Psalm xliii. 4), love, and goodwill to all men. It was not without a deep personal experience that he recorded the advice contained in his 37th Psalm, "Fret not thyself because of evil doers." "Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile." Thus he endeavours to teach "transgressors" God's ways, and to "convert sinners." Not by any dogma of his own creation, but by his own personal experiences and bitter life, he has learnt the needs of his fellow man, who shares with him the human frailty which "flesh is heir to." For himself he prays for "a clean heart," and a "right spirit."

The Songs of David and the other Psalmists have inspired musicians of every faith in all ages.

In order to show the undying influence of the Psalmists in the spiritual world, it would be well to classify the subjects of which they treat. They left no want to be filled up by a future generation. They deal with the life of man in relation to his fellow-man, to himself and to God. Communion with God formed the pivot on which David's whole existence turned; he said, "I give myself unto prayer."

"I love the Lord because He hath heard my

voice and my supplications" (Ps. cxvi. 1). To follow David in his outpourings to God, would be beyond the limits of these "few words."

He also breathes out songs of praise and joy in a spirit which no other literature can surpass. "Shout for joy," he says (Ps. xxxii. 11). "My soul shall make her boast in the Lord" (Ps. xxxiv. 9).

From David we learn what it is to trust in God. He does not offer us any immediate return for our trust, for he says, "Wait patiently for Him;" "Rest in the Lord;" "Truly my soul doth wait." But, oh! with what certainty does he put forth the blessedness of such faith, which the poorest creature may share with the richest. "This poor man cried and the Lord heard him, and delivered him from all his fears" (Ps. xxxiv.).

To those who make the Psalms a study, it will be seen that they are the speech of souls illumined by God's presence, whilst the experiences of David's outer life are common to all, and repeat themselves in every generation.

Hence the value of the Psalms and the secret of their influence.

David attaches great importance to the "laws of God," as taught by Moses. In his 19th Psalm, he says, "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul," "making wise the simple;" "the statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlighten-

ing the eyes." These things he estimates above the value of "fine gold" and "sweeter than honey." For this comparison he gives his reason, thus:—because "by them" is thy servant "warned," and a "great reward" is the result. Again, in his 119th Psalm he gives the laws of God his deepest consideration. This Psalm is divided into twenty-two parts—he explains in what consists the blessed fruits to those who "walk in the Law of the Lord." He says, "O how I love Thy law, it is my meditation all the day."

I now direct attention to those portions of the Psalms, which record the history of Israel.

In the 122nd Psalm, we read, "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem." "Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy Palaces."

Throughout the Psalms we find frequent mention of the "God of Jacob" (Ps. xlvi. 7), and the Psalmist often refers to the Holy City and Zion "the joy of the whole earth" (Ps. xlviii. 2), and it is with great love and tenderness that he records the events of the early history of his people (Ps. lxxvii. 20), to whom he addresses himself with earnestness, that they might not be as their fathers, "a generation that set not their hearts aright, and whose spirit was not steadfast with God;" he reminds them of the time when God led them with a "cloud by day" and "all the night with the light of fire."

Notwithstanding their experiences of the marvellous power of God manifested to them, they said, "Can God furnish a table for us in the wilderness?" David said this was speaking against God. "The Lord heard this and was angry." God had "rained down" manna for them to eat and gave them of the "corn of Heaven" (Ps. lxxvii. and lxxviii.). "Man did eat Angels' food" (Ps. cvi. 15 and 16). David says, "God made known His ways unto Moses, and His acts to the children of Israel."

The history of Israel, as recorded by David, appeals to the inner life of every living soul.

Hence it is that the Psalms can be made a means of help and grace, a source of strength and comfort and consolation, to all who enter into the spirit of them; but to the Israelite they are his very life, leading him into the "path that shineth more and more unto perfect day." "Whoso is wise and will observe these things, even they shall understand the lovingkindness of the Lord" (Ps. cvii. 43).

The Rev. C. H. Spurgeon.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 29TH, 1882.

I HAVE this day heard Mr. Spurgeon preach at the "Tabernacle."

It is twenty-four years ago since I last heard him. He then preached at the Surrey Gardens to an audience of eleven thousand persons.

I recorded my reflections at the time. I am told that the "Tabernacle" contains about 6,000 seats, which are filled every week at each service.

My thoughts of twenty-four years ago have been revived to-day, as to the source of Mr. Spurgeon's great popularity. He is earnest and he believes all that he preaches. He addresses a mass of people of every condition, who all hunger and thirst for religious comfort and guidance; their shepherd supplies these wants; he feeds them with the food "convenient for them" (Proverbs xxx. 8), whilst he rivets their attention by amusing anecdotes, and cheers their hearts with the promise of "salvation."

Upon this occasion he took his text from St. John v. 24, and vi. 47. He said he attached the greatest importance to the words "Verily, verily," because in these words you have your answer to the question, "What must I do to be saved?" These words "denote a clear and certain revelation."

"He that believes this, and is baptised, shall be saved," and *vice versâ!* Mr. Spurgeon further illustrated his subject by an incident to show the danger of those who do not believe! Thus it is from fear of consequences many are influenced to give up an evil course, who would otherwise remain hopelessly hardened.

Meeting at the Mansion House, February 1st.

FEBRUARY 2ND, 1882.

"To express public opinion upon the outrages inflicted upon the Jews in various parts of Russia and Russian Poland."

THE very successful public meeting of yesterday, presided over by the Lord Mayor at the Mansion House, bore witness to the higher life and to the keen sense of righteousness and justice of this civilised and free nation. It was a question to be dealt with both morally and materially.

This public demonstration was brought about by the private influence of those most near and dear to me, whose names did not appear. The meeting was got up by the influence of my husband, who drew up the requisition and obtained

the signatures of thirty-eight of the most eminent men in politics and science and literature. He was greatly assisted by our dear son, Oswald.

I am reminded of the days in Israel's past, when God pointed to those in whom was the desire to obey His will. This was a divine recognition of true and upright men.

Responsibilities of Human Life.

SEPTEMBER, 1882.

TRUE religion is based upon man's moral responsibility.

This proposition has been fully taught by Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalmists. The Psalms are so universally appreciated, as to have formed a portion of every liturgy, or religious service; but the religion of David is not generally understood.

The object of these few words is to show from the teachings of the Old Testament that so perfect is the harmony of thought throughout, from Genesis to Malachi, that it is more like the product of one soul than the collective writings of many centuries.

The Pentateuch, or five books of Moses, is supposed to have been written about 1,452 years before the Christian era. The book of Psalms (principally by David) 1,063 to 1,015 years before the Christian era. Isaiah lived about 760 years before the present era, and Malachi (the last of the prophets) lived about 397 years before the present era, and yet throughout this collection of writings which we call the Bible, we find a unity of spirit, perfect for all the needs of human life and for all time. In order to illustrate my observation that much misapprehension exists with respect to these old teachings, I will here make an extract from a very valuable work that was translated into English from the German published in 1714. Sturm's "Reflections for every day in the year." In his reflection for June 3rd, 1st vol., p. 317, the author describes the doctrine of the Christian era as like the "Sun's vivifying rays," which "dispelled the gloom of ignorance, and the shade of mental darkness, that held in bondage the soul," such (he says) "was the state of the moral world before the 'vivifying power' of this new teaching, which 'diffused life and consolation over the hearts of men.'"

This is the pre-conceived idea that has, for so many centuries, been transmitted from generation to generation.

At a public meeting lately, an eloquent divine

of the present day expressed a similar idea in these words, that the "Old Testament is but the 'Cradle' of the New."

In studying the Old Testament, it will be seen that every subsequent teaching that is in harmony with it, is strengthened in authority, whereas, any new theory that casts a cloud over the past, described as "mental darkness" that "held in bondage the soul," has worked an unfavourable influence upon the world's progress towards the true "peace and good will," which the virtuous of all nations desire. When "justice and judgment" are established in the earth, and not till then, will the nations learn how to settle their differences by arbitration, and not by murder and destruction. The day will come when "they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (Isaiah ii.).

The prophet Micah, who lived and prophesied at the same time, uses the same language as Isaiah does, "they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (iv. 3).

Hosea also lived and prophesied at this time and refers to the same condition (ii. 18). After the punishments for idolatry there will come a time

of peace, when God will "break the bow and the sword and the battle out of the earth, and will make them to lie down safely." Amos also preached at this time, and said, "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord" (viii. 11).

This condition that marks the time of peace is most clearly described thus, "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt" (Amos ix. 13).

Before this condition prevails, man will have to learn his responsibility as a moral agent, not the result of doctrine or dogma, but of such doctrine as Micah preached in these words, "He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" (Micah vi. 8).

This grand principle of moral responsibility is the distinguishing feature in the life of every great man. I here make an extract from a speech lately delivered in the House of Commons by Mr. John Bright, upon the occasion of his retirement from the Cabinet, on the Egyptian Question. (Extract from the *Times*, of Tuesday, July 18th, 1882).

"The House knows—many members, at any rate, who have had an opportunity of observing any of the facts of my political life, know—that for forty years, at least, I have endeavoured to teach my countrymen an opinion and doctrine which I hold, viz.: that the moral law is intended not only for individual life, but for the life and practice of States in their dealings with one another. * * I cannot repudiate what I have preached and taught during the period of a rather long political life. * * I cannot turn my back upon myself and deny all that I have taught to many thousands during the forty years that I have been permitted, at public meetings, and in this House, to address my countrymen. I asked my calm judgment, and my conscience, what was the part I ought to take. They pointed it out to me, as, I think, with an unerring finger, and I am endeavouring to follow it."

In these words are concentrated the promptings of an inner life. The work of every life is a work of sacred responsibility; and it is in our "calm judgment," and in our "consciences," that we are to learn our duty to our God, to ourselves, and to our fellow men.

Much is done in these days: we send to one another annual reports of the work in our Schools, and other Institutions; we greet the most degraded with a kindly word of hope, in order

to win them back into the path of righteousness. We deeply sympathise with those noble men,* whose means and advanced age might secure them from every sight and sound that is distasteful, but who, nevertheless, keenly feel the responsibility of their influential position, and spare themselves no discomfort in discharging it.

I trace the source of human responsibility to the following fundamental laws, derived from the sacred volume:

(1.) That the Lord He is God, that He is One, and His name one, that He is "Our Father," the "Father of the spirits of all flesh."

(2.) That God is perfect love, mercy, goodness, truth and justice.

(3.) That it is in the soul of man that the image of God is reflected. Hence it is that the divine attributes may be faintly emulated by man.

(4.) That the presence of God is as true as the presence of the sunlight! through the soul (man's higher nature), "the light of God's countenance," is recognised.

(5.) No change is possible in the Government of the Universe, nor in the moral government of human life.

(6.) The happiness of man on earth depends upon his obedience to the unerring moral and spiritual laws of God.

(7.) Earth is the sphere through which frail man passes for a limited time only, where every opportunity is afforded

* Lord Shaftesbury and others.

him for education and the development of his higher nature.

(8.) Worldly prosperity is no sign of God's favour.

(9.) In adversity a sustaining power and a means of strength are afforded.

(10.) That man becomes elevated by communion with God on earth is a fact that is completely established by experience and revealed religion. Hence it is that God's laws are "perfect, making wise the simple, rejoicing the heart, enlightening the eyes."

Lastly (11), man is born in the world to a condition of moral and spiritual discipline; his happiness or his misery is dependent upon his own conduct in respect to himself, his God, and his neighbour.

The foregoing principles are not sufficiently recognised in our daily life; had it been otherwise during the last thousand years, which, "when passed," is like a "watch in the night" (Psalm xc. 4), how could so many successive generations have come into life without the least sign of progress?

One age cannot cure the evils of centuries, but let all those who feel deeply on the subject avail themselves of every means, however limited, of promoting the general moral health. It is a false delicacy that keeps silence, when a few simple words outspoken, at a favourable moment, may direct attention to prevailing errors which familiarity renders it difficult to see. I believe that

if we were really alive to our individual responsibilities, an amount of unhappiness would be spared, both to families and nations, that cannot be estimated.

We need the influence of religion, as proclaimed by Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalmists. From these immortal writings we learn the principles of right, with as much certainty as scientific truth is learnt from the study of nature. Without these divine lessons it would be impossible to work out a system making for true happiness on earth; because every human theory is more or less selfish and erring, "whereas the law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul, and righteous altogether" (Ps. xix.). It is then the sacred duty of those who acknowledge their moral responsibilities to show that, at the present time, the words of the great lawgiver, and the Prophets, are as needful as in the days when they were recorded by Moses, in his immortal song: "Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth" (Deut. xxxii.). Although this was addressed to a handful of people, the smallest nation on earth, yet it was for all mankind and for all time to come. When Moses proclaimed the most glorious doctrine of the Infinite goodness and greatness of God, he said: "He is the Rock, His work is perfect: for all His ways are judgment: a God of truth and

without iniquity, just and right is He." This was the language of the great lawgiver, whose speech "shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass" (Deut. xxxii. 2).

We hear much about the "Tribal" nature of the religion of the Israelite; but it seems to me that the true answer to the charge is to be found in the sacred scriptures. Unless the Pentateuch, the Prophets, and Psalms are for ever closed, the religion of the Israelite must be for all humanity a "blessing to the nations," not the religion of a tribe only. In these "few words" upon human responsibility, I cannot go into the grand principles of the law of Moses, but I must refer to the result of those principles as exhibited in the prayer of Hezekiah (king of Judah in the days of Isaiah), where he says concerning Sennacherib, King of Assyria: "O Lord our God, I beseech Thee save Thou us out of his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that Thou art the Lord God, even thou only" (2 Kings xix. 15, 16, 19). Had this record of the faith of Hezekiah not been preserved, what would posterity have known of his religion?

Solomon had imbibed the glorious faith of his father David, and embodied it in his prayer at the dedication of the temple, as recorded in both the 1st book of Kings viii., and 2 Chronicles vi. That

this faith may be manifested is both the "wisdom" and the "understanding" of the Israelite, whose mission it is to proclaim the moral responsibility of every human being (Deut. iv. 6).

Revivals.

SEPTEMBER, 1882.

IT has always been a matter of deep interest to me to discover how much of truth there is in the various religions of the world. There are honest, upright people, who are most earnest in teaching that which other people, equally earnest and sincere, are denying and proclaiming to be sinful.

From time to time, we hear of some new movement, or some spasmodic effort to awaken man to a sense of the great need of religion. In these so-called "Revivals" must be discerned the recognition of a great want in human life.

To the Israelite these movements are highly interesting. To me it seems that the great problem of the present day is to know how, and by what means, the fact of our spiritual nature is to be established, how is to be revealed the great

truth that in every human being there exists a soul—a soul to be awakened—even in the most ignorant and degraded.

It is said that the "end justifies the means"; hence it is that at one time we hear of the efforts of a "Moody and Sankey"; later on of the "Salvation Army."

I feel that almost any means are justified that will achieve the good work intended by the leaders of these movements.

Before the Egyptian Pharaoh would acknowledge a higher power than his own, the "Ten Plagues" were needed; not until they had come would he consent to obey God's will by sending Israel forth from the "house of bondage"; whereas the great Elijah perceived Him less in the wonders of nature, than in the "still, small voice" of conscience.

Happily we live in times when the necessity of education for the people is acknowledged, and by the laws of all civilised governments this want is being supplied.

The people are no longer left in a state of complete ignorance; but hand in hand with secular knowledge must be taught that higher wisdom which no mere mental culture will supply.

Will the classics or higher mathematics ensure gentleness and charity? Will birth and social condition or political influence secure them?

The answer to such questions is to be found in those recent persecutions the seeds of which are to be traced in the very centres of education, in great European Universities. We find the answer also in the well-written articles of periodicals, penned by those born to be leaders or teachers of the age; and even feminine gentleness and influence are perverted in the work of awakening vulgar prejudices against the helpless.

These are examples of mental culture and favoured social conditions conjoined with a merely rudimentary spiritual state—a state from which only the Bible can develop a true advance.

"O man, what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God" (Micah vi. 8).

Why stir up the evil passions, the prejudices of the dark ages, to crush and to destroy? The disciples of evil form a larger army than those who constitute the workers in God's holy vineyard. Hence it is that it is not only among the ignorant and most degraded that the "workers of iniquity" are found, and where a "revival" is needed.

It is needed everywhere, in every country, in every family. If there are thousands who can only be reached by the exciting influences of a "Salvation Army," and awakened out of the nightmare of evil, then I say the end justifies

the means. But how shall men and women of higher degree be aroused to a sense of their spiritual responsibilities? It seems to me that there is but one means—it consists in teaching the actual presence of God. A perfect belief in a perfect God. Is this too simple, or is it too difficult for human comprehension? If all nations, all families, all individuals could realise the great fact of God's presence, then communion with Him would follow, and in the language (uttered more than two thousand years ago) we should pray for help:—"Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from Thy presence; and take not Thy holy spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation; and uphold me with Thy free spirit" (Psalm li. 10, 11, 12).

Let the soul once experience that "hunger" and "thirst" for God, described by David, "My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God" (Psalm xlii.), and there would be an "awakening," the need of which was never greater than now in this nineteenth century.

I have no hesitation in saying that all the miseries of human life, in every generation; all the cruelties, and all the persecutions that darken history, are the result of ignorance concerning God; the stunting of the soul; that immortal part of us, through which alone we can

perceive the light of God's countenance, and through which only we can know that God is Omnipotent, Omniscient, and Omnipresent.

Had there been no other of the sacred books preserved than Deuteronomy, posterity would have had sufficient cause for thankfulness!

Besides the ten commandments, in the 5th chapter, we learn, in the 6th chapter, the law of love, and man's capacity for love, in language so clear as to leave nothing for a future age to develop. It is the practice we need; that deepening of the soul's spiritual relation to God through love, that is further alluded to in the following verse: "Know, therefore, that the Lord thy God, He is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love Him and keep His commandments to a thousand generations" (Deut. vii. 9). This is the lesson that should reach the heart of every thoughtful person.

"For this commandment, which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off. It is not in Heaven that thou shouldst say, Who shall go up for us to Heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? Neither is it beyond the sea that thou shouldst say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and

in thy heart, that thou mayest do it" (Deut. xxx. 11-14).

It is for our own happiness that we are commanded to "love the Lord our God, and to walk in all His ways, and to keep His commandments, His statutes, and His judgments." The Psalmist understood this when he prayed, "Teach me to do Thy will, make Thy way straight before my face." Who can say what miseries would be averted in families and nations if this truth were realised?

If a closer union with God, in our daily life, were effected, how great would be the influence wrought upon us! What gentleness, what charity would spring up in our midst! What forbearance with one another, what peace and happiness!

If the learned had less of vain glory, and more of the spirit of this lesson, the following words of Jeremiah (written 588 years before the Christian era) would be appreciated: "Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: but let him that glorieth, glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth Me, that I am the Lord which exercise loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the Lord." (Jer. ix. 23, 24). This

is the learning needed by all classes, by persons of all creeds! This is the faith to make us more godly and less selfish, more pure in our affections, more true in our friendships.

It has been well said that "truth and piety are of every country and religion"; I can add my testimony to this fact, as the result of a life-long study of the Bible, and my acquaintance with persons of every clime and creed.

I believe that by an abiding consciousness of God's presence and with the grace of God, we can bring about the ascendency of our spiritual nature over our lower instincts; I believe that by means of this higher culture, we can rise above all pettiness and all vexations, as is said by David: "Fret not thyself because of evil doers;" "Rest in the Lord;" "Wait patiently for Him" (Ps. xxxvii.). By the awakening of the soul to the actual presence of God, we should be enabled to bear the reverses of life in a temper that is not otherwise possible. When this awakening takes place, a humble and a noble spirit is the result, and submission to the "ills which flesh is heir to" is a necessary consequence. Then we shall know that, in our darkest days, God can show us light. Paths will open, unseen before. "Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart" (Ps. xcvii. 11). "Unto the

upright man there ariseth light in the darkness."

In utter strangers we find loving friends. By this communion with the Divine our young men will overcome selfish longings, and yield to a high sense of duty; and our young women will not rush into unhappy marriages from worldly motives; but learn to seek God's guiding spirit in all matters. By its means the rich man will understand his responsibilities, as Moses taught: "Thou shalt remember the Lord thy God; for it is He that giveth thee power to get wealth" (Deut. viii. 8); and he will know that his riches, however great, are but as a loan from God, to be accounted for; even as a parent is but the frail agent for the work given to him to do for a new generation.

Is it so difficult to realise that God is nearer to every living soul than any friend can be; and that we possess the capacity and the privilege of communing with Him? He is the "God of the spirits of all flesh." We can speak to Him in language of praise and joyous gratitude for the comforts of life; or we may pour out our sorrows to Him "in all times of trouble and distress." We learn all this in the Psalms. Why wait until that last solemn hour, when our beloved ones are departing this life, before we proclaim the actual

living God?* Why not constantly acknowledge this in our daily life?

This is the "Revival" we need.

In these reflections I desire to bear my own personal testimony to the importance of the soul's culture. Though there may be dark pages in the story of some lives ("We spend our years as a tale that is told," Psalm xc. 9), yet, when read by the light of God's presence, those dark pages will be explained, so great is my faith in the eternal principles laid down by Moses, and preached by the prophets, and by the "sweet singer of Israel" (2 Samuel xxiii. 1).

"*In Memoriam.*"

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 22ND, 1882.

(An Overwhelming Grief).

OUR sweet son Algernon Orobio breathed his last yesterday (Saturday) morning at a quarter past

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* It may be interesting to know, that at the death-bed of the Israelite, it is the invariable custom for the Minister (or bystander) to proclaim the Unity and Presence of God, so that the departing soul may be comforted, in hearing that which he can no longer utter for himself. "Hear, O Israel! the Lord our God is one."

two, like a lovely infant hushed to sleep. It was the death of peace, amidst the surroundings of love: he was as beautiful in face and form as in heart and soul. He had completed his twenty-eighth year on the 16th of July. Notwithstanding a long illness of twenty-one days we entertained every hope of his recovery, when an unfavourable change deprived us of our dearly beloved son.

"I am oppressed; undertake for me" (Isa. xxxviii. 1, 4). "When I fall shall I arise; when I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me" (Micah vii. 8).

Unless I can realise this deep faith how can I sustain others in our great sorrow. "He will not return to me, but I shall go to him." "Thou hast made him most blessed for ever."

The Re-assembling of Parliament.

FEBRUARY 15TH, 1883.

THE business of the country commences to-day as usual with Prayer. May the spark of the Divine Spirit grow into a flame that shall abundantly manifest itself in the Assembly of the nation's Representatives, irrespective of theological

differences and diverse opinions, to the end that all the nations may praise God, and understand that "the Lord He is God; in heaven above and on the earth beneath there is none else." Not until this faith is reached and becomes universal, not until every assembly of the nations consciously testifies for God, can we hope for "peace on earth" and good-will between man and man.

Prayer.

1883.

PRAYER is the most powerful influence in the world. It is only those who give their whole mind to the subject who are in a position to test their opinions by ascertained facts. It has sometimes taken more than one generation to prove a great truth in science; it is the application of a newly discovered truth to practical life that establishes its value. We read how keenly prayer was believed in and practised by the patriarchs and the writers of the Pentateuch centuries ago. The lamp of faith needs constant tending and replenishing, or it will burn dimly. Heads of families and teachers of new generations do well

to encourage reflection on this subject, the direct practical result being peace and love in the domestic circle. Human life without God is a state of darkness, but those who listen to the "still, small voice" will learn what is meant by prayer. "In God's light shall they see light." "The Lord is my light."

Reminiscence of a Sermon by Lord Alwyne Compton, now Bishop of Ely.

MALVERN, AUGUST 5TH, 1883.

THIS afternoon I have been greatly pleased with a sermon I heard from the Dean of Worcester (Lord Alwyne Compton), in the Priory church at Malvern. It was in behalf of the "Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals." He took his text from Psalm cxlv.: "The Lord is good to all, and His tender mercies are over all His works." He went on to show how numerous are God's mercies over all His works, including the animal kingdom. He said, that in the possession of mere physical life there was a happiness which the animal shares in common with man. With this

fact as a basis, he enlarged somewhat upon the sympathy which should exist between us and the animal creation. He said we have only to watch the frisking of cattle in the field, or listen to the singing of birds in the air, to observe that it is given to them to enjoy their lives. Although we of the highest creation possess dominion over the brute for our service and use, we must not abuse this trust. He referred to the 8th Psalm, the 104th, and to many other portions of the Old Testament. The preacher further explained the law of Moses, Deuteronomy xxv. 4: "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn." In ancient times, threshing the corn was effected by the labour of oxen, and they were not to be denied the power of helping themselves to food by being muzzled. He concluded his remarks by saying that it was a sad thing that Christians had to be taught kindness to animals by a "Society for the prevention, by law, of cruelty." I have recorded as far as I remember, the chief points of a very valuable discourse.

Baroness Lionel de Rothschild.

MARCH 23RD, 1884.

ON Sunday, the 16th, the funeral of the late Baroness Lionel de Rothschild took place.

If we could reveal to the world the hidden machinery of a life that has been consecrated to the religion of the Bible, the beauty of holiness would be made manifest in a way that could not fail to extend to future generations of every creed. I have been told by one who knew her intimately that the actions of benevolence with which her name was associated are as nothing in comparison with the nobility of her heart and mind.

In a memoir by Dr. Kalisch, he writes:—"Though her heart embraced all that is human, it was, with special affection, devoted to the young and the poor. . . . Her care for the poor had a source which was, perhaps, not obvious to all—humility, true and deep. She was thoroughly imbued with that fellow-feeling which is expressed and enjoined in the Scriptures: The rich and the poor meet together, for, Have we not all one Father; has not one God created us? These truths pervaded her as the sap pervades the tree. As God called the poor 'His people,' so she con-

sidered the poor, above all, as her friends and her kindred.

"She had ever present before her mind, not the privileges of wealth, but its duties and responsibilities. She won happiness by making or sharing that of others. Mindful that 'Man does not live on bread alone,' the poor were not only to be fed, but to be taught, not only to be clothed, but to be trained, refined, and elevated. Kindness was the root of all her busy deeds, and all her busy thoughts." When all that was mortal of a noble life has passed away, it is well to trace the source of the everlasting good that remains.

Her "Prayers and Meditations," printed in 1870 for private circulation, have been the strength and consolation to many a sister in affliction. They were written "To the memory of her fondly cherished daughter."

The late Duke of Albany, and Thoughts about the Royal Family.

MAY, 1884.

THE *Fortnightly Review* of this month contains a deeply interesting account of the late Prince Leopold, Duke of Albany. He was born on the

7th of April, 1853, and died on the 8th March, 1884, having been married since April, 1882. He leaves a young widow expecting her second child. This heavy cloud is broken by a ray of sunshine—the happy marriage of Princess Victoria of Hesse and Prince Louis of Battenberg. The young bride is the eldest daughter of the late charming and lamented Princess Alice, whose letters, lately published in English, are a valuable gift to all who know how to estimate works of love and righteousness.

The preface is written by her sister, the accomplished Princess Christian (Helena), in which she makes a tender, loving allusion to the loss of her dear youngest brother. She says, "As he was the last of us to see my dear sister in life, so he has been the first to follow her into the Silent Land."

I believe that these revelations of the inner life of the Royal Family will be valuable in showing the effect of the true knowledge of God. It is under the influence of that belief that I watch with keen and loving interest the endless works of goodness shown in the lives of every son and daughter of the Royal House. The Queen, her lamented Consort, and their children, have encouraged all those works that can refine and elevate the people. It is well to trace the connection between cause and effect, which must be

discernible in all lives from the highest to the humblest in the social scale. It was a perfect love which united the Queen and Prince Albert in marriage,—love and sympathy have been the fruits of that union. Intellectual culture alone cannot supply the place of the higher spiritual life, whose expression is manifested in charity and love. Such powerful influences have acted upon the lives of the Queen and the members of her family. We cannot too highly estimate the value of the example and moral influence of our present Royal Family.

God is the Divine source of all our affections, and God is love. He is the infinite Father; in loving Him our human affections are purified. Peace and happiness are the results of the sacred ties between parents and children, brothers and sisters, friend and friend. Whilst these are the sources of our greatest joy, they are likewise the root of our deepest sorrows, when a dear one "goes before us." But such sorrows sanctify the remainder of our lives.

I have always thought that the most beautiful feature in the life of our Queen is the readiness with which she has revealed her domestic life to her people. How else could we know of the sacred spring that works so much good, I mean the Queen's influence upon her children, and her children's children? It is announced this week

that the Queen has presented copies of her book, entitled "More Leaves from the Journal of a Life," to St. Thomas's Hospital and to the London Hospital, for the use of the patients. Her Majesty has sent copies of her new book to Guy's Hospital, and to the Lying-in Hospital, North Road, Lambeth. No one can fail to appreciate the value of these publications given to the people. In further illustration of my views as to the importance of cultivating a religious life, I transcribe the following extracts from the *Fortnightly* of May 1884, concerning the late Duke of Albany, whose early death has been a national loss:—"To those who love to watch the shaping of character, that subtle inter-mixture of ancestral warp and woof in a young life, there is always something interesting. It was in the year 1879 that Prince Leopold began to enter into the ideal which his wise father had perhaps been the first among Royal personages distinctly to concede. Prince Leopold had the inestimable advantage of being his mother's son as well as his father's. The conditions of his lot were a growing acceptance of duty; so far as sickness and suffering helped him to achieve it. They were the blessings of his life. The Prince had learned at the gates of death a sense of the reality of the unseen which many theologians might envy. From the society of the old and young the Duke derived special pleasure. Few brothers have held

their sisters so dear; nor did he ever talk intimately on these matters without introducing some special allusion to his nieces at Darmstadt. He was specially devoted to the arts and graces of life, music especially."

The Anti-Slavery Jubilee Meeting.

AUGUST 3RD, 1884.

ON the 1st of August I attended the Anti-Slavery Jubilee Meeting at Guildhall. It was the fiftieth anniversary of the abolition of slavery in the British Colonies. The Prince of Wales presided. The platform was filled with those who were deeply interested in the emancipation of the slaves, including my dear husband. I was greatly pleased with the speech of the Prince of Wales.

There was special interest attaching to the remarks of Canon Wilberforce, whose grandfather, after forty years' work in the House of Commons, lived to see the realisation of his life's efforts.

Twenty millions sterling were paid as compensation to the slave-owners. It was a great victory for England in the cause of humanity.

Thirty years ago I read with keen interest the life and diary of William Wilberforce in five

volumes. The records of the inner and outer life of that noble man were profoundly stirring.

It was a great satisfaction to have been present on the occasion of such a Jubilee, and to hear his eloquent grandson speak of the "secret springs" of his grandfather's life, and the great work he had lived to see accomplished, indeed, he had the right to say a word on such an occasion.

Lord Derby, Colonial Minister, Lord Granville, Foreign Minister, represented the Government. The Archbishop of Canterbury, Cardinal Manning, and others were present.

That great achievement of fifty years ago was the result of individual and personal influence in behalf of God's loving-kindness and mercy.

Canon Wilberforce remarked that this question had been brought "where David brought Goliath, not face to face with man's power and human diplomacy, but face to face with the living God."

In my husband's youth in Jamaica, where he was born, he had witnessed the cause of love and mercy in the lives of his parents towards their slaves. His father did much towards their emancipation; he was a great friend of negro-education and took an active part in the protection of the missionaries.

During the insurrection in 1830 and 1831 their lives were in great danger, and but for the influ-

ence of my husband's father they would probably have been sacrificed. My husband helped to teach the negroes in the Baptist Sunday Schools.

Those only are free men who advocate the cause of justice, love and mercy between man and man, whilst those are slaves indeed who deny to others the rights they claim for themselves.

Thoughts about General Gordon.

FEBRUARY 11TH, 1885.

THE sad news of the death of General Gordon reached us yesterday morning. The untimely death of this great hero is another illustration of the truth that this life is not our final destiny. We live but for a time, which passes rapidly away. The unseen future has never been revealed to us, but in the unfulfilled life of a great man we are sure of a future of blessedness, peace and joy, and he will have left an influence for good that can never die. It is almost a year ago, 20th February, 1885, that I cut out from a paper the following extract, headed "General Gordon at Work":—

"General Gordon would be responsible to no

one but to that Higher Power, which he always declares is the real Governor-General of the Soudan, and of which he is only the humble instrument. The future was then a blank to this great man. He had already realised the fact that this earthly life is one of severe discipline. General Gordon's watchwords were 'Duty and Responsibility.' No brighter example of a noble and heroic life was ever recorded. His fundamental principle was love and faith in God. Thus it was that in a 'short life he fulfilled a long life.'"

The Society for Promoting Christianity among the Jews.

MAY 11TH, 1885.

THE *Pall Mall Gazette*, of Friday evening, the 8th inst., contained a short report of the Annual Meeting of the London Society for the Promotion of Christianity among the Jews. It was stated that in the year just passed £35,000 had been collected and spent for the Society's work, and that "twelve Jews had been baptized." When I contemplate the mission of the Israelite, God's appointed servant, to teach mankind God, that

"the Lord He is God, and His Name one," I feel that this attempt to frustrate that mission is not only futile, but that it is wasting resources which ought to be devoted to the work of civilising multitudes in this country who need help, and of checking the torrent of evil. It will be a blessed day for Christendom when the Israelites, now scattered among all the nations of the earth, shall have fulfilled their mission,—when they shall have exerted that sanctifying influence for which they were called and are preserved. They are witnesses of God's revelation to man, contained in the Pentateuch and preached by the Hebrew prophets. The mission of Israel is to awaken men's consciences, and to stimulate them to do what is right one to another and to walk humbly with God. Not until this teaching is accepted will the true end of religion be attained. The Society for converting the Jews to a different creed will do well to reflect upon the words of Ezekiel applied to false teachers (xiii. 18): "Will ye hunt the souls of my people, and will ye save the souls alive that come unto you? I will deliver my people out of your hand, and ye shall know that I am the Lord."

Life a Condition of Discipline.

AUGUST, 1885.

I BELIEVE that our life in this world is intended for our moral and spiritual development. We must avail ourselves of the conditions provided for our instruction or correction as they arise from day to day. The great conflict seems to be between the human and the Divine in our own nature, inasmuch as we are "created in the image of God," we partake of the Divine in our souls. In death we "return to the earth as it was," and "our spirit returns to God who gave it." Those who fail to cultivate the religious faculty, miss the great purpose for which they live. Religion is the necessary food for the heart, and for the mind. "Man lives not by bread only." Every trial that falls to our lot has a moral purpose, and is for our good. Often the light of the world becomes dim, before we can recognise the light of God's love towards us. It is for us to work out the Divine purpose by the aid of God's laws which transcend those of human expediency. We are often misled by false lights, but God's understanding is infinite. Let us then seek His guidance at every step, and we shall better comprehend the purpose of life as the opportunity for the higher development of our being.

The Opening of the Colonial and Indian Exhibition.

MAY, 1886.

HOW many a valuable lesson is conveyed to the reflecting mind by the events of our daily life.

At the ceremony of the opening of the Colonial and Indian Exhibition by the Queen, the Prince of Wales read an address to her Majesty, in which he gave a brief outline of the circumstances which led up to the undertaking now completed. To which the Queen replied in these words :—

"I am deeply moved by your reference to the circumstances in which the ceremony of 1851 took place, and I heartily concur in the belief you have expressed that the Prince Consort, my beloved husband, had he been spared, would have witnessed with intense interest the development of his ideas, and would, I may add, have seen with pleasure our son taking the lead in the movement of which he was the originator." I have carefully preserved these words as another illustration of the presence of God in the life of man; the history of our Royal Family is within my own memory; the life-long sorrow which came upon the Queen on the 14th December, 1861, seemed to have sanctified her life; religion was

her sustaining power. The tree is known by the fruit it bears; thus it is that the moral and spiritual life of our Queen is manifested in good and noble work. "When the righteous are in authority the people rejoice, but when the wicked beareth rule the people mourn" (Prov. xxix. 2). "Let the righteous be glad, let them rejoice before God, yea, let them exceedingly rejoice" (Psalm lxviii. 3).

Life with God on Earth.

THE QUAKER, THE CATHOLIC, THE UNITARIAN, THE JEW.

MAY, 1886.

LIFE with God on earth has ever been a subject of deep interest to me. I have observed it in persons of different religious beliefs. Among those who lived their life with God, and left an undying spiritual influence was George Fox, the Founder of The Society of Friends, born in 1624, died in 1690. Of him we read that "he was a man who consciously walked with God"; he was a God-inspired man, he lived in an abiding sense of God's presence. Archbishop Fenelon, the Roman Catholic (born in 1651, died in 1715)

also "lived in the abiding sense of God's presence." His letters of wise counsel and spiritual guidance to both men and women, offer strength and comfort to all who battle with difficulty, and they are as fresh to-day as when they were written.

Michael Servetus, the great Unitarian in the sixteenth century, was said to have lived completely with God. He was condemned to the flames, a sentence carried into effect on the 27th of May, 1553. His influence, notwithstanding, has remained, never to perish.

We have now to deplore the death of Dr. Leopold Zunz, an Israelite, born on the 10th of August, 1794, who died at the age of ninety-two, in March, 1886. We read of him that "Doctor Zunz was something more than a scholar, he was an inspiring influence in the inner life of the nineteenth century of Judaism, an influence that has not yet been exhausted nor is likely to be so." There are many illustrations of the fact that life with God on earth is a reality, to which the history of the world's great souls, no matter what their creed, has borne eloquent witness. Going further back, we may mention the names of Maimonides, born at Cordova in 1135, died at Cairo in 1204, after a brilliant career of authorship and public usefulness. For six generations his ancestors had been distinguished for learning. Joseph Albo (of Spain), in the fourteenth century. Abarbanel,

born at Lisbon in 1437, died at Venice in 1508. Spinoza, of Portuguese descent, born at Amsterdam in 1632, died in 1677. Moses Mendelssohn, born at Dessau in 1729, died in 1786, and numerous others, the mention of whose names alone suffices to illustrate the fact that in the world's history every great soul that has lived with God on earth leaves an undying legacy for good.

Within our own memory we can mention those who have passed away, whose lives have been consecrated to God and duty, whose example and influence will never cease.

Our Relations with God.

NOVEMBER, 1886.

"LORD, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty; neither do I exercise myself in great matters, nor in things too high for me" (Ps. cxxxi.).

I feel that these words are applicable to me when I ask myself the question, What is my mission as an Israelite? There is much ignorance about Judaism; there is also apathy among its professors.

As a reflecting Israelite I ask:—Is there no remedy? It sometimes needs a spiritual micro-

scope, if I may so express myself, in order to discover hidden causes.

Judaism concerns our true relationship with God; to understand this is to attain the realisation of the greatest truth.

By communion with God we obtain the light of His countenance and we become influenced by His love, mercy, righteousness, and peace. My mind is more and more convinced that the evils of life are the direct results of false theories about God and our relations to Him. I feel assured that every false doctrine concerning God in His relation to man is a poison that time develops into the worst forms of Atheism, ungodliness, and hatred, instead of love between man and man, nation and nation. How is it that centuries of wickedness, oppression and persecution have been going on in the name of religion? If this question were probed to the root, it would be found to be entirely the result of false teachings about God.

In this life we are disciplined by the many and varied trials which we encounter. The uncertainties of life are favourable to a godly life. We are driven to a refuge that nothing earthly can afford us.

The Psalmist said, "I had fainted unless I had believed to see the goodness of God in the land of the living."

"Wait on the Lord, be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart; wait, I say, on the Lord" (Ps. xxvii.).

It is impossible for the Israelite to contemplate these experiences without enthusiasm.

The life of the spirit is to be found in the old Scriptures.

Isaiah said, "O Lord, I am oppressed; undertake for me" (Isaiah xxxviii. 16). It is for us ever to listen to the still small voice which comes when in "hunger" and "thirst" we seek God in our troubles.

"Mine eyes are unto Thee, O God the Lord. In Thee is my trust" (Ps. cxli. 8). O God, Thou art infinite love. "Life, love, and benevolence, righteousness, mercy, blessing, and peace," all these come from Thee.

By communion with God we obtain the light of His countenance, and we become influenced by His love.

As the sunlight comes from the sun to give nourishment to animal and vegetable life, so God's light gives peace and happiness to the human soul; without these, all is darkness and discord. Ezekiel said, "God is equal." We are unequal.

The "great man" discovers great principles and applies them to practical life; let us discover in the moral and spiritual sphere why it is that so

much darkness, evil and crime prevail in this nineteenth century.

I believe that if the simple creed of Judaism, the absolute, undivided unity of God, and His relations with man, "created in His image," were understood, practical results would follow with as much certainty as those of the scientist in his search after truth.

This is the preaching that is needed everywhere —freed from the rocks which have wrecked the faith of so many.

Our sensibilities are continually shocked by the records in the newspapers concerning not only those who are known as the criminal classes, but the clever and the cultured, who belong to the higher classes. Is there not a cause for all this?

My heart grows sick and heavy when I contemplate so much misery in the world.

Eighteen hundred years of the preaching of doctrinal religion has failed to awaken the sense of moral and spiritual responsibility.

The words of Malachi are as fresh to-day as when they were uttered about 2,000 years ago:—

"Have we not all one Father?

"Hath not one God created us?

"Why do we deal treacherously, every man against his brother?"

Micah said:—"He hath showed thee, O man,

what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God" (Micah vi.).

Liberalism in Religion.

(The Rev. Page Roberts.)

MARCH, 1887.

I HAVE been much interested in reading a volume lately published by the Rev. Page Roberts, entitled "Liberalism in Religion." It is a collection of fifteen short sermons. Mr. Roberts says, page 18: "I am deeply convinced that real faith in God gives a moral energy and a moral ideal which nothing else can equal, and that if we, in any way, as individuals, or as nations, lose this energising faith in God, our moral efforts will have a less lofty reach." "What we believe becomes the texture of our mind, and the law of our conduct" (page 75). "The real belief of a people is that which is moving it on to greatness or decay. We should have true beliefs about God" (page 84). With these sentiments I deeply sympathise. I feel that it is my duty to do the little that in me lies to expound and spread this belief in God. In the last chapter of this volume, Mr. Roberts well says

that "the religious spirit and genius which moved the Abrahamic nomads was inherited and augmented by their descendants, and has never been equalled yet by any race of mankind." If then the descendants of that race fail to do their part in the world, they are unworthy of their inheritance, yet the race must continue because "God changeth not, therefore it is that the sons of Jacob are not consumed" (Malachi iii. 6). No earthly power can destroy them, nor can an army of "conversionists" change the convictions which constitute their knowledge of God, nor have centuries of dispersion and cruel persecution changed Israel's position as between God and themselves It is in these days of liberty of speech and "liberalism in religion" that we must individually justify the exclamation: "Surely this is a wise and an understanding people."

Thoughts about Open-air Preaching.

(At Tunbridge Wells)

MAY, 1887.

THIS afternoon I saw a large number of people assembled on the common for an open-air service and preaching. I was much interested. It

was a fine afternoon, and there were assembled at least two hundred people—men, women, and children enjoying their holiday. I quite approve of open-air preaching under such favourable conditions. But, alas! the sermon did not justify my hopes, because the stereotyped phrases could not fail to make many a "righteous heart sad, whom God hath not made sad" (Ezekiel xiii. 22). Oh, that I could have heard such preaching as the following—that God looks down from heaven upon all the children of men to see if there are any that do understand and seek God (Psalm xiv. 2). That the "eye of the Lord" is ever upon them (Psalm xliii.). That God searcheth out every hidden thought and act, that He knows the days of the upright and heareth the cry of the poor, that He knoweth our frame, and as a father loves his children, so God loves us, because He is our Father; that through the discipline of life we are corrected for our good, because the "eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good" (Prov. xv. 3).

Had the preacher unfolded the true doctrine of the divine love, which many a young couple would have appreciated, as also the toiling father and mother, listening with the little ones in their arms; had he made an appeal to all those affectionate hearts, and endeavoured to bring home to them the "lovingkindness and tender mercies of God";

had he told them that they must live a life of love and peace on earth, and that it is within their own power to obey the perfect law of God—I believe that when the people had dispersed to their homes, new resolves and cheering hopes would have sprung up in their hearts, and greatly helped them in the duties of a new week.

The Queen's Jubilee.

(A pleasant reminiscence.)

JUNE, 1887.

YESTERDAY my husband and I attended the celebration of the Queen's Jubilee in Westminster Abbey.

After the service we witnessed a scene that was deeply impressive. It was the greeting between the Queen and her children. It must have found an echo in the heart of every one present.

From a printed report I make the following extract:—"After the service was over, her Majesty kissed first all the Princes and then all the Princesses within the dais," and then follow these words in reference to the mutual salutations of the Queen and the Crown Princess, "It was

mother and daughter, not Queen and Princess who embraced."

True greatness must be measured by the love that exists between God and man. I was reminded of this truth by the scene before me. Going back to the earliest records of the principles in which our Queen was trained, we read that her mother said to her, "I am anxious to bring you up as a good woman, and then you will be a good Queen also."

Now, after fifty years of her reign, we see the rich fruits of her loving soul, in the good works of her children and her children's children. Her whole family presents to the nation an example of domestic affection, of "doing good," "loving mercy," and "walking humbly with God."

I copy from the daily papers of Friday, May the 20th, 1887, the words addressed by the Queen to her people :—

"I recall with satisfaction the assurances of respect for the rights of conscience which I gave to my subjects at the beginning of my reign, and I now repeat the like assurances with the full conviction, confirmed by experience, of the beneficial results which flow from a large and generous toleration extended to every form of earnest religious belief."

Again I say, when the "righteous are in authority the people rejoice."

In honour of the Queen's Jubilee on Friday, June 17th, 1887, the Prince of Wales, accompanied by the Princess of Wales, Princess Louise and Prince George laid the foundation stone of the new home for destitute boys in Shaftesbury Avenue. The new building will be adapted for the training of about one hundred boys and will include a home for thirty-five working boys. In the course of the proceedings the Prince of Wales said, "It is a great satisfaction to us that I should be afforded the opportunity to-day of laying the foundation stone of a home, which is to be a Jubilee memorial in commemoration of the fiftieth year of the Queen's reign; at the same time I am glad to think that this building is to be named 'Shaftesbury House,' as a memorial of that great and distinguished philanthropist whose loss we must always and for ever deplore."

Thoughts at the Close of 1887.

EVERY day seems to me to teach fresh lessons. Life is made up of light and shade, cloud and sunshine. The man of science treasures up the smallest experience he gains in his search after the truths that specially interest him. Thus am I ever

seeking for more knowledge of God, for that knowledge must powerfully affect my daily life.

The influence of the sun upon the earth is not more powerful, and fruitful of good, than the influence of love upon human character. The darkest forms of human misery are seen where love is not.

God is infinite love. The conception of the love of God is the basis of Judaism. We may trace throughout the Bible an unbroken train of personal experiences of the love of God. It is as natural to men to love God as it is to love one another. It is in our hearts to do it! (Deut. xxx. 14.) Any teaching that hides God from the soul is like an eclipse of the sun. The love of God is of urgent and practical importance to every one. That love is the vital force of religion, and is in harmony with our nature. "Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord."

Retirement from Parliament.

NOVEMBER, 1888.

IN these selections I have been careful to avoid, as much as possible, reference to domestic incidents. I cannot, however, withhold allusion to one event.

It is just twenty years since my dear husband was first returned to Parliament for the borough of Dewsbury.

In 1883 he had a severe illness which confined him to his bed for several weeks, and it was many months before he was well enough to resume his public duties. Then it was that he retired from his profession and restricted his energies to Parliamentary work. Immediately after the close of the present session of Parliament, during which he was as active as ever in the House of Commons, he was again attacked with serious illness. On this occasion our medical adviser had no hesitation in expressing the opinion that my husband should abandon all public duties and live a quiet life.

This seemed at the moment impossible, for arrangements had been made for his annual visit to address his constituents in the month of October.

These arrangements were necessarily cancelled during his indisposition. In the autumn, my husband found himself obliged by the state of his health to vacate his seat in Parliament. It was in many ways a wrench after so long and so satisfactory a connection with his constituency and the House of Commons. He had fought five contested elections at Dewsbury, being returned each time with an increased majority. His constituents were desirous that he should still

represent them, though he should find it essential to limit his attendance at Westminster, but that was a course to which he would not consent. His retirement was received with the warmest expressions of regret on the part of his constituents, as well as by numerous friends in the House of Commons, without distinction of party.

Mystic Passages of the Psalms.

JANUARY 31ST, 1889.

I HAVE had great pleasure in reading an article in the current number of the *Jewish Quarterly Review*, by Mr. Claude G. Montefiore. It is headed "Mystic Passages of the Psalms."

He has treated his subject from the highest spiritual point of view, and in such a way as to supply food to the soul seeking more light and knowledge of God. The writer says:—

"It is clear that communion with God is an end in itself. . . . The God to whom it is sought to draw near is a living God. The conditions of communion depend upon the unfettered activity of God's love, and this love is vouchsafed to man

in precise correspondence with man's own measure of love to God" (pp. 151, 152).

I make this extract because I think that this is the right view to take of these Psalms. Referring to the author of the Psalms, the writer says:—"These men were endowed with an intensity of religious sentiment which in every age is but the possession of a few, while for us its value is heightened because of its large measure of first hand originality" (pp. 145).

It is now six years ago since I began a little work intended for publication, which I called a Commentary on the Psalms, my object being to convey to others the great help I had received from their daily use. I also desired to shew, by parallel teachings in other portions of the Bible, the harmony of spirit throughout the Scriptures. I think that every effort should be made to re-awaken the spiritual life of the Israelites. I believe that such an article as Mr. Montefiore's will do much to enlighten the Israelite as to his spiritual mission. It should be the effort of the Jews to promote in every way the fulfilment of their sacred obligation.

Mr. John Bright.

MARCH 29TH, 1889.

ON Wednesday, the 27th, the great and noble soul of John Bright passed away from this sphere to the higher region of eternal blessedness. I recall with great satisfaction the delightful conversations with him at our dinner-table.

On July 6th, 1881, he asked me many questions as to my views upon the Book of Esther and the Psalms. I had just been writing my reflections on David and the Psalms. He said he would like to read them. I make the following extract from his letter to me on the 16th :—" I spent a pleasant evening at your house, and shall remember our conversation on the Book of Esther and the Psalms.—Yours sincerely, JOHN BRIGHT."

On Wednesday, July 12th, 1882, he dined with us, upon the anniversary of our wedding-day. It was the last day that he was in the Cabinet. A few days later Mr. Bright made his statement in the House of Commons upon his resignation. A few days before he breathed his last he expressed a wish that a message of remembrance and regard should be conveyed after his death to a few friends, of whom I was one.

Thoughts during Passover Week.

APRIL, 1889.

I HAVE often given expression to my views of this great historic festival. Each successive recurrence of the feast is another milestone passed on our journey through life.

"This day will be unto you a Memorial; ye shall keep it a feast to the Lord throughout your generations." "Seven days shall ye keep it, an ordinance for ever" (Exodus xii., Deut. xvi.). From year to year we are reminded that when we were delivered from the house of bondage at the first Passover, a mission was given to us to teach the truth about God and His dealings with man. There is a danger of allowing the outward observances of the Passover to obscure the divine truth of which they are only the symbols.

When our children shall ask us, "What mean ye by this service," the answer is at hand—"This is done because of that which the Lord did unto me when I came out of Egypt" (Ex. xiii. 8).

In this sphere of constant change it is a sacred duty to emphasise the importance of the spiritual teachings of this season of our freedom. If we fail to avail ourselves of the inspiration which these annual celebrations offer, we take

upon ourselves the responsibility of destroying the "old landmarks," and our posterity will grope in darkness.

New Moon.

(Hebrew Month, "Iyar.")

MAY 1ST, 1889.

THE service for the Eve of the New Moon consists chiefly of the 104th Psalm: "Bless the Lord, O my soul."

Those who carefully read the Liturgy in our daily prayer book and the service for the new moon will recognise the fact that the spirituality of Judaism has never been surpassed. It inculcates the highest lessons; it justifies our aspirations for a future of "peace on earth," and goodwill between man and man, between nation and nation, when warfare shall cease. "Swords shall be turned into plowshares, and spears into pruning hooks" (Isaiah ii. 4; Micah iv. 3). It is for the Israelite to make known that "the beauty of holiness" is a reality, so that "All the people of the earth may know and understand that the Lord is God, and that there is none else" (Deut. iv. 39).

Until these religious truths are freely enunciated by those whose mission it is to unfold them, a want must be felt everywhere, in church, chapel, and synagogue. There is in every soul a latent craving after God, which the world can never satisfy. There is no religious system that can fulfil this so clearly as the religion of the Old Testament, as expounded by the prophets. All that is spiritual in every other system of religion is taken from our Bible. God is infinite love. Any religious teaching that hides His love from us is a deterrent. I believe that the time has arrived when the Israelite of the nineteenth century is bound to show forth that light which will shine before men.

Thoughts about the Worship of God.

AUGUST, 1889.

WHEN we think about the worship of God, we cannot fail to perceive the important influence it must exert upon our lives. The worship of God stimulates a spiritual energy in the worshipper, whatever may be the form in which he worships. A life with God is sometimes revealed by a serene countenance more potent in its influence upon

others than speech. The presence of God is clear to those whose minds are "stayed on Him" (Isaiah xxvi.). I have known of instances in which what is called "conversion" in religion has been brought about by means of direct personal influence rather than by argument. There is depth of character in the true worshipper of God. Language can be found in the advocacy of any cause; but a life with God on earth is eloquent without words. Its silent force produces love, patience, charity, gentleness and peace. These are the fruits, so poetically described in the first Psalm, of "a tree planted by the rivers of water that bringeth forth his fruit in his season."

The British Association.

SEPTEMBER 20TH, 1889.

YESTERDAY'S *Times* contained a report of the meeting of the British Association at Newcastle-on-Tyne. It was the fifty-ninth annual meeting of the Association, commencing on Wednesday evening, the 11th, when about 3,000 persons were present. Sir Frederick Bramwell, F.R.S., presided.

Professor Flower referred to the "beneficial results upon human life, conferred by the diffusion of scientific knowledge." He said that nearly "all the marvellous benefits which have been conferred on man have resulted from the application of scientific discovery." He remarked that "thirty years ago, before Professor Huxley himself had done so much to raise the character of naturalists and natural history in this country, the naturalist was described as an innocent, harmless, but useless individual"; whereas "through these scientific discoveries we are getting only now to the causes and prevention of disease. More than this, they have produced effects upon our mode of thinking on many subjects—on our relations to each other, and to the universe—effects, the end of which we hardly see at present." He further remarked that "progress depends on giving full liberty to that superiority, wherever it asserts itself, having full fling." In conclusion he added, "I will leave it to you to apply to yourselves, in your own social condition and social life, the application of that law. I will not press it any further at present, but leave you to think it out afterwards."

With this valuable record before me of the words of one of our most distinguished men of science, I make a few reflections of my own. I believe that if an "Association" of religious thinkers were formed, meeting annually to consider

the highest spiritual problems, irrespective of denominational differences, some difficulties might be solved, thereby promoting the good of all, which to use Professor Flower's words, "we hardly see at present." If search were made in matters affecting the higher life of man in his relation to God, it would "completely change our whole mode of thinking," and greatly help towards establishing that state of social peace and good will which we all desire. By such research I believe that our moral and spiritual atmosphere would become clearer, and errors of centuries might be removed and the "system on which we train our children be revolutionised."

The Bishop of Newcastle thanked the "Men of Science" for what they had done, (*Times* of Monday 16th), observing that "the more they did, the more religion would benefit. Religion had nothing to fear from scientific discoveries." Surely some great change is needed since "cruelty to animals" and "cruelty to children" render necessary the intervention of the State.

I fear that the "leaders of the people cause them to err." If religion were exercised in precisely the same manner as science is applied in the discovery of truth, practical results would soon be manifested in our social life. The mind would be ennobled and the character strengthened.

The implements of war have developed. Why

should not the implements of peace? Vast social evils demand heroic moral efforts to combat them. Popular preaching is not adequately directed to these ends. It is too much concerned with doctrinal abstractions.

Formerly houses were built without regard to Sanitary Science, in ignorance of laws which are now known to all. Who can say what might be the practical result of a great association, meeting to recognise, and to elucidate those spiritual and moral laws which are as cogent as the laws of science.

The Geographical section of the British Association was presided over by Col. Sir Francis W. de Winton. He showed the results of interchange of thought and industries in countries at one time unknown. It is equally desirable that there should be interchange of thought in matters concerning the spiritual interests of society.

God Alone—Thinking Aloud.

OCTOBER, 1889.

THERE are days which pass away without our having learnt anything from them—there are others, again, when a series of lessons unfold

themselves to us, leaving us wiser as years glide on. Most of us become conscious of the necessity of "numbering our days, and applying our hearts to wisdom." The habit of periodically recording our experiences may be of benefit to others as well as to ourselves. We can scarcely estimate at their exact significance, the passing events of life, whether joyous or sorrowful, until we see them from a distance in their true perspective, as our Heavenly Master intended we should see them. "God alone can see the end of all things at their commencement." "It is He who made us, not we ourselves." Let us trust in the Great Author of our being, and then we shall perceive how perfect are His dealings with us, and shall arrive at a clearness of vision respecting the troubles against which, in our ignorance, we rebel.

One of the most striking characteristics of life is the twofold experience, that we are sometimes the creatures of circumstances, and that sometimes circumstances are our own creation. In either case, however, the human will is invested with a distinct power. In the one, where events occur which are beyond our control, we may gather spiritual strength by the mere submission to them. In the other, that of ordering our service aright, the scope for a discretion founded on the higher life is boundless.

Immortality.

(Death of Robert Browning.)

DECEMBER, 1889.

TO the Jewish mind belief in the immortality of the soul is almost of equal importance with that of the existence of God. Indeed, the Jewish conception of our union with God pre-supposes our likeness to Him in the victory over death. The Hebrew prophet has exclaimed "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death" (Hosea xiii. 14).

By this lofty spiritual faith the Israelite sees in his relation to God a permanent existence, a bond which is not dissolved by death. So firmly planted is this hope of an everlasting life beyond the grave that we regard it as an axiom of our religion.

The Bible in its records of men who "walked with God" contains abundant evidence that such was the hope of God's chosen ones. Malachi, the last of the Hebrew prophets, eloquently testifies to this idea in that memorable passage referring to those who thought upon His name. In the earliest part of the Bible we have the statement that "God created man in His own image"; and there are shown throughout the writings of the

Seers and Psalmists such expressions of a future life as are found in words like these: "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit to God who gave it" (Eccles. xii. 7). "At Thy right hand are pleasures for evermore" (Ps. xvi. 11). So complete is our reliance upon the abiding presence of God after death that we do not concern ourselves with the fear of danger when our time on earth is fulfilled.

The Jewish Liturgy reiterates the faith in immortality, and we find there in the daily service these significant utterances: "May we be worthy to inherit the good and the blessing reserved for the life of the future world, to the end that my glorious triumphant soul may sing praise to Thee without ceasing." We are all free to form our own conceptions of the blessed reunion with our dearly beloved ones who already dwell with God. Some of us have experienced a foretaste of heaven in the perfect love and sympathy which has bound us to those who are no longer by our side, and to others who still remain with us. This is heaven on earth.

The conviction that the separation by death from some most precious object of our affection is but temporary, is an unspeakable help in our sorrows. This is a subject which is independent of dogma, for it appeals to every loving heart upon which the burden of bereavement has been laid.

Those dear lives which were cut short in their prime are perpetuated in a higher sphere of love and blessedness, and we are induced to say of them, "They have fulfilled a long time in a short time," for by their death they have opened up to us treasures in Heaven. The great men of the earth have lived in the hope of a life beyond the grave, and have not been dismayed when they came to the close of their earthly pilgrimage.

In giving expression to these thoughts concerning the "Immortality of the Soul" in the last day of the present year—I cannot refrain from alluding to the recent death of Robert Browning—a sorrowful event which has profoundly impressed me. I subjoin an extract from an "In Memoriam" article written by my son Oswald, which appeared in the *Jewish Chronicle* of Friday, December 20th, 1889.

"The death of a great man is always an event which must touch the reflecting portion of society; whether he be statesman, poet, or warrior, the transition of a mighty soul and a genius from the world of experience to the world of memory and of immortality, are thoughts which fill the minds of communities and of individuals who watch such mortal end. There is no experience which seems to proclaim more emphatically the hope of everlasting life than that which is expressed by such an announcement as was rung in the ears of Israel,

on the death of Abner, by their poet King: 'Behold a Prince and a great man has this day fallen in Israel.' To us Israelites there is something peculiarly pathetic in the life and death of the illustrious poet whom all cultivated English speaking people are mourning this week. Our race is concerned above all other groups of people in the propagation of religious truth. Robert Browning was essentially the poet of philosophy and religion. He sang of God, of faith, of life and of death, in those higher aspects of the great problem to which the Jewish people, if faithful to their mission, cannot fail to listen with unspeakable sympathy. In every poem and in every verse bequeathed to the world of letters by Robert Browning, there is the one melodious song of hope, of immortality, of duty and of God, which must ever sound to ears of a people gifted with religious genius as the most harmonious of all poetry. Pessimism and sensualism were as distant from the pen of Browning as they are from the eternal truths of the Hebrew faith. This extraordinary similarity between the ideas of this poet and those of our race may account for the exceptional regard in which he was always held by the Jewish people."

The Fiftieth Anniversary of my First Entry of Reflections.

APRIL 3RD, 1890.

THIS is the fiftieth anniversary of the day on which I wrote down the first of these reflections. I have found greater difficulty than I anticipated in preparing these "selections" for the press, because of my desire to detach them from the incidents which called them forth.

I look back upon this half-century and its experiences with the deepest gratitude, and I declare that I have found in Judaism all that is possible to satisfy the highest needs of our spiritual nature. There are many sources of joy and sorrow in the world, but those who look to God for help and guidance in the vicissitudes of life, will be blessed with an ever-growing sense of His presence. The joys which appertain to our higher nature, such as peace, content, love and sympathy, are realised, while material things are dwarfed, and become shadowy and unreal.

When we look back upon the past at a distance of time, we perceive that our life has been ordered by infinite love as a wise discipline tending to our ultimate good. I feel keenly that the mission of Israel claims from the individual the responsibility

of developing his nobler nature. To me, the vital question about Judaism is its character and its mission. It is enough that these are sublime, that Judaism proclaims the mandate of love and hope in the future of humanity; that it teaches the practice of mercy between man and man; that it bids us look forward to the time when international disputes shall be settled, not by the sword, but by appeals to the principles of justice and right, as preached by Isaiah and Micah.

A century ago slavery prevailed, and the education of the toiling classes formed no part of public policy. How great the change in the past fifty years! I believe absolutely in the invisible power by which God works upon human character effecting the final conquest of evil.

"O God, Thou hast taught me from my youth, and hitherto have I declared Thy wondrous works. O God, forsake me not until I have shewed Thy strength unto this generation, and Thy power unto every one that is to come" (Psalm lxxi. 17, 18).

RACHEL SIMON.

APPENDIX A.

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES TO THE SUBJECTS OF "THE SPIRIT OF GOD" AND "THE PEACE OF GOD.'

It will be seen from Scripture references throughout the Biblical writings that the "peace of God" and the "spirit of God" are conceptions of the highest moral and practical importance. The grace of God is thus defined by Moses (Exodus xxxiii. 12-16): "Wherein shall it be known here that I and Thy people have found grace in Thy sight? Is it not in that Thou goest with us?" "My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest." Moses said to God: "If Thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence."

Moses exclaimed: "Would to God that all the Lord s people were prophets, and that the Lord would put His spirit upon them" (Numbers xi. 29).

Numbers xxvii. 15, 16.—Moses addressed God in prayer, "God of the spirits of all flesh."

Numbers xxvii. 18.—Joshua was the appointed successor to Moses, because he was "a man in whom is the spirit."

Psalm li. 10.—The Psalmist prayed, "renew a right spirit within me."

Psalm cxliii. 10.—"Teach me to do Thy will: Thou art my God; Thy spirit is good."

Psalm lxxxv. 10.—"Righteousness and peace have kissed each other."

Numbers vi. 22, 27.—The priestly blessing was a prayer for the "peace of God."

Jeremiah xxix. 7.—Jeremiah wrote to the elders of his people who had been carried captives to Babylon: "Seek the peace of the city, and pray unto the Lord for it; for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace."

Isaiah xxvi. 3.—Isaiah said: "Thou shalt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee."

Isaiah xxxii. 17.—"The work of righteousness shall be peace."

Isaiah xlviii. 18.—"O that thou hadst hearkened to My commandments, then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea."

Isaiah v. 4.—"Great shall be the peace of thy children," etc.

Isaiah lx. 17.—"I will make thy officers peace, and thin exactors righteousness."

Micah ii. 7.—"Oh, thou that art named the house of Jacob! Is the spirit of the Lord straitened?"

Micah iii. 8.—This great prophet said that it was in the "spirit of the Lord" that he addressed the people of Israel. Then follows the future of Israel's peace, in the same words as those of his brother-prophet Isaiah (Micah iv. 3): "Nations shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

Isaiah referring to that great future, for which all the pious of every creed ardently long, used the same language (Isaiah ii. 4). Therefore "take heed to your spirit that ye deal not treacherously" (Malachi ii. 16).

Psalm cxxxix. 7.—"Whither shall I go from Thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from Thy Presence?"

Eccles. xii. 17.—" . . . . the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."

These few verses suffice to illustrate the importance of cultivating the study of the Hebrew scriptures.

APPENDIX B.

SUMMARY OF THE BOOK OF JOB.

Chap. ii. 11, 13.—In Job's extreme distress his three friends, Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar, came to mourn with him and to comfort him, but when they arrived they were so grieved, that for seven days and nights "none spake a word to him, for they saw that his grief was great."

iii. 1.—After this Job was the first to speak; he cursed the day of his birth, complained of his life, and longed for the day of his death.

iv.—Eliphaz was the first to reply, and opened an argument to prove that suffering must be the result of sin. To this Job replied—

vi.—In justification of himself.

viii.—Bildad follows by showing the justice of God in His dealings with men.

Job acknowledges the truth of this, whilst he contends that a man is not to be reproached because of his afflictions.

ix.—Zophar then reproves Job for justifying himself, whilst he proclaims the unsearchable wisdom of God.

xii.—To this Job responds. Whilst acknowledging the the omnipotence of God, he severely reproves his friends for condemning him.

Eliphaz continues the argument by showing—

xv.—that it is an old tradition that the wicked should suffer, and that Job had already condemned himself.

xvi.—Job maintains his innocence, whilst he severely reproves his three friends for their unmerciful condemnation of him; he said :—"My friends scorn me; but mine eye poureth out tears unto God."

xviii.—Bildad reproves Job for presumption and impatience, and contends for the justice of God. Job then made a touching appeal—

xix. 21.—to the pity and sympathy of his friends, whilst

xix. 26.—he declared his faith in God in a life after this.

xx.—Zophar philosophises upon the "portion of the wicked."

xxi.—Job replies by observing that the wicked

xxi. 7.—often prosper in the world.

xxii.—Eliphaz followed the argument of Zophar, and

xxii. 13.—maintained that there must be a reason known only to God for so much suffering.

xxiii.—To this Job answered by expressing the wish that he could plead his cause before God, because he knew that

xxiii. 6.—the Almighty would not plead against him, "No! but He would put strength into him."

xxv.—Bildad remarked in few words, that it was impossible to justify himself with God.

xxvi.—To this Job answered that his friends had failed to help him with their arguments; he also could speak of God's infinite power, and declare that He is unsearchable;

xxvii.—but whilst the breath of life was in him, he would maintain his own integrity,

xxvii. 8 & 9.—and his own heart would not reproach him, for God would not hear the cry of the hypocrite.

xxviii. 18.—Job then descants upon the various possessions of man, and describes wisdom as being above them all, priceless in value, God-given, and not to be found in the earth, in the seas or in the skies, but in the conscience of

nor regardeth the rich more than the poor,—for they are all the work of his hands"; His eyes are upon the ways of man, and He sees all his "goings." He hears the cry of the poor and the afflicted. It is by very severe means that the soul is awakened. In other words—the soul receives light from God's countenance. "When He hideth His face who can behold Him?" It is for man to say to God, "That which I see not, teach thou me; if I have done iniquity, I will do no more."

xxxv., xxxvi., xxxvii. — Elihu continues his discourse, arguing upon the greatness of God, and man's relations with Him. "Behold God is mighty, and despiseth not any! He is mighty in strength and wisdom. His justice is infinite. Behold God is great, and we know Him not, neither can the number of His years be searched out; great things doeth He, which we cannot comprehend!" Elihu concludes his address in these words, "O Job, stand still, and consider the wondrous works of God!" He now asks Job a series of questions that are beyond human comprehension. Again He speaks of God; "we cannot find Him out; He is excellent in power, and in judgment, and in plenty of justice: He will not afflict. Men do therefore fear Him: He respecteth not any that are wise of heart."

After this we read that the voice of God is heard out of the whirlwind, the wonders of nature are proclaimed concerning the firmament—the earth, the sea, light and darkness, life and death, and God's marvellous works in the universe, the power of the horse in battle.

xl.—Hence the question, "Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty instruct Him? He that reproacheth God, let him answer it."

Now, at last Job awakens, as it were, to a higher consciousness of the Presence of God, and of his relations with Him, and he exclaims: "Behold, I am vile; what shall

I answer Thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth. Once have I spoken, but I will not answer; yea, twice, but I will proceed no further: I know that Thou canst do everything, and that no thought can be withholden from Thee; therefore have I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not." He concludes: "I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear, but *now mine eye seeth Thee.* Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."

After this "God blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning." He possessed property in abundance, he was blessed with seven sons and three daughters. "And in all the land were no women found so fair as the daughters of Job, and their father gave them inheritance among their brethren," and Job lived to a great age, and saw his fourth generation, and died "being old and full of days."

RACHEL SIMON.
